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

Report of the 13th Meeting of the Parties to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)

Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles

6–10 July 2026

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Agenda item 1 – Opening of the meeting

1.1 Opening statements

1. The 13th Meeting of the Parties (MoP) was held at Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles.
2. The Honourable Principal Minister, Mr Wallace Cosgrow, Minister for Fisheries, Agriculture and Blue Economy, made a welcome statement (**Annex A**).
3. The Chairperson of the MoP, Ms Anaïd Panossian (France, on behalf of its Overseas Territories (OT)), made an opening statement (**Annex B**) and declared the meeting open at 9:20 a.m.
4. The Chairperson opened the floor for delegation introductions. The list of participants is available in **Annex C**.

1.2 Practical arrangements for the meeting

5. The Executive Secretary, Mr Thierry Clot, welcomed the participants attending in person and online and thanked them for their continued commitment to the work of SIOFA. He also thanked the Government of Seychelles for its generous hospitality in hosting the meeting and for organising the cultural tour at the weekend. The Executive Secretary then explained the practical arrangements for the meeting.

1.3 Admission of observers

6. The Executive Secretary introduced a communication from Korea. Korea wished to inform the MoP that due to internal circumstances and a scheduling conflict, it would not be able to participate formally in the 10th meeting of the Compliance Committee (CC10) and MoP13; rather a delegate would connect remotely, without intervening in the meeting, solely to follow the proceedings and monitor the progress of discussions. Korea further wished to inform the MoP that its absence is without prejudice to its right to express its views on any matters discussed or outcomes reached during the meeting and that neither its absence nor its remote connection should be construed as Korea's express agreement to, or endorsement of, any decision, conclusion, or other matter agreed during the meeting.
7. The MoP welcomed the Observers present at the meeting, which included Comoros and India as Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCs), as well as Sri Lanka, South Africa, the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Deep-Sea Fisheries (DSF) Project, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO), the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC), the Deep-Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC), the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), the Joint Commission of the Seychelles-Mauritius Joint Management Area (JMA), the Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), the Southern Indian Ocean Deepsea Fishers Association (SIODFA), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
8. The Joint Commission of the JMA stated that Mauritius and Seychelles have sovereign rights on the living and non-living resources on and below the seabed in the JMA, that it will work closely with SIOFA to avoid any confusion or conflict, and that, with goodwill and respect, this unique situation can be managed without major problems.
9. Sri Lanka presented MoP-13-INFO-16, which provided an overview of Sri Lanka's fisheries sector and an expression of Sri Lanka's interest in cooperation with SIOFA. As Sri Lanka's fisheries primarily target species that are outside the mandate of the IOTC, it recognises the importance of engaging with SIOFA to ensure that these fishing activities are managed within the appropriate regional fisheries management framework. Sri Lanka has established comprehensive fisheries management systems and is committed to science-

based fisheries management, effective monitoring, transparency, and compliance with international obligations. Sri Lanka informed the MoP that it was in the process of completing the necessary national procedures and aims to formally submit its application to become a CNCP to SIOFA in the near future.

10. France (OT) pointed out that its *OSIRIS-II* patrol vessel has been conducting patrol activities in the Agreement Area and that it sighted Sri Lankan fishing vessels. The patrol vessel could not communicate with the Sri Lankan vessels. France (OT) encouraged the Sri Lankan authorities to ensure that their vessels are easily reachable and accessible in accordance with SIOFA's high seas boarding and inspection (HSBI) programme.
11. Sri Lanka offered to share any relevant information with France (OT).
12. The EU noted that Sri Lanka operates a large number of vessels that are targeting SIOFA species, including on the high seas in the Agreement Area. The EU expressed its position that Sri Lanka should therefore apply to become a contracting party (CP) of SIOFA, rather than applying to become a CNCP, which would not be sufficient to fulfil all of Sri Lanka's obligations under the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA).

1.4 Status of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

13. The FAO is the Depositary of the Agreement. The Executive Secretary provided an update on the Status of the Agreement in MoP-13-INFO-03 (**Annex D**). The Executive Secretary confirmed that there are 10 CPs, 1 Participating Fishing Entity (PFE) and 5 signatories, including 2 CNCPs.
14. **The MoP NOTED the Status of the Agreement.**

1.5 Participation in decision-making

15. The Executive Secretary reported that all CPs and PFEs had paid their contribution for 2026. Therefore, all CPs and PFEs were entitled to participate in the taking of decisions during this meeting.

Agenda item 2 – Administrative arrangements

2.1 Adoption of the agenda

16. The Chairperson presented the provisional agenda (MoP-13-ADM-03).
17. The MoP agreed to add "Research cruise planned for Saya de Malha" as agenda item 7.3.2.
18. The MoP agreed to add "Discussion on the CC ToRs" as agenda item 4.6.1.
19. The MoP incorporated the above revisions and adopted the agenda (**Annex E**).

2.2 Confirmation of meeting documents

20. The Chairperson informed the MoP that the list of meeting documents is presented in MoP-13-ADM-04 (**Annex F**).
21. The Executive Secretary informed the MoP that paper MoP-13-32, a proposal from France (OT) for a new Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) related to the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), had been submitted late.
22. The Chairperson noted that the same paper had been submitted to the CC. She noted that the CC had agreed to accept the paper, despite its late submission, noting that it relates to the important matter of the BBNJ Agreement, and had held substantive discussions on it.
23. The MoP similarly agreed to accept paper MoP-13-32, despite its late submission, and noted that the paper had been revised and further developed following CC10 (MoP-13-32-Rev1).
24. The EU commented on MoP-13-INFO-02. The EU noted that according to the paper, the

number of vessels operating squid fisheries in the Northwest Indian Ocean would have increased from 30 vessels in 2015 to 361 in 2025. In relation to this, the EU noted paragraph 294 of the 11th Scientific Committee (SC11) report, which provided an overview of biological research on squid caught by China in the Northwest Indian Ocean. The paragraph states that China has fished for squid since the early 21st century both in and beyond the SIOFA Area, often using squid-jigging and light-seining gears. It also states that China intends to collect more data for Indian Ocean squid and conduct more research, including analysis of statoliths and stock assessments, and to share the results with the SC. The EU also noted paragraph 299 of the SC11 report, which states that, in light of the spatial extent of China's historical squid-fishing in the SIOFA Area and biological research on the same species from an adjacent area to the SIOFA Area, and the fact that squid are a mobile species, this may be a straddling stock, and as such, the MoP may wish to consider whether there are any potential management implications. Based on this, the EU was of the position that the continued extraction of squid in the Northwest Indian Ocean, even if it is outside the SIOFA Area, could have a severe impact on the squid population of SIOFA. The EU also noted paragraph 270 of the MoP10 report, which states that China reiterated its intention to bring its authorised squid-fishing fleet in the Northwestern Indian Ocean, adjacent to the Agreement Area, under the management of a regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) in order to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable utilisation of fishery resources in this region.

25. The EU noted that apart from issues related to squid, MoP-13-INFO-02 also mentioned many alleged human rights violations. The EU believed that these allegations warranted investigation by the flag State.
26. In light of the above points, the EU recommended that the MoP request that China undertake the following:
 - a. Investigate whether any fishing activity by light seiners has taken place within the Agreement Area at any time.
 - b. Bring relevant information to the SC and to the next MoP on Chinese catches of squid in the Northwest Indian Ocean, considering this is part of the same stock as in SIOFA.
 - c. Voluntarily share the results of the investigation on all the other allegations in the report with SIOFA and the IOTC.
27. China acknowledged the concern expressed by the EU and the EJP. China stated that it is investigating the case and takes the allegations seriously. However, it pointed out that the incident occurred outside the Agreement Area and that there is therefore no explicit legal basis for sharing catch data and investigation outcomes with SIOFA. China stated that RFMOs only have a mandate to require CCPs to share data from inside their areas of jurisdiction, that it considers this to be a matter under the purview of the IOTC, and that it will therefore share the results of its investigation of the matter with the IOTC, not SIOFA. China also noted that it has fished for squid for many years and that SIOFA has neither expressed interest in, nor requested information from, these fisheries. China suggested that as SIOFA is cooperating with the IOTC, it could seek to exchange information with the IOTC on this matter as necessary.
28. The EU reiterated its view that these fisheries, while occurring outside the Agreement Area, are still very much of relevance for SIOFA, considering these are fisheries of a SIOFA species. The EU noted paragraph 294 of the SC11 report again and welcomed the Chinese offer stated in the paragraph to collect more data and to share the results of its analysis of statoliths and stock assessments with the SC. The EU noted that China did not wish to voluntarily share the findings of its investigation in SIOFA and expressed its intention to

take up this matter bilaterally with China.

29. China pointed out that it conducts scientific research cruises and shares these data with the SC each year. China reiterated its view that the MoP should not have substantive discussions on this issue. China remains open to bilateral exchange with the EU on this matter and, where appropriate, sharing relevant information.
30. The MoP agreed that it would not discuss MoP-13-INFO-02.

2.3 Appointment of rapporteurs

31. The MoP agreed to appoint Mr Alexander Meyer (Urban Connections, Tokyo) as rapporteur.

Agenda item 3 – Intersessional Decision-Making

3.1 Review of intersessional decisions taken since MoP12

32. The Executive Secretary summarised the intersessional decision taken since MoP12, as described in MoP-13-INFO-07. Intersessional decision 2025-I concerned the MoP's support for the establishment of a part-time Data Officer position and the recruitment of a part-time technician under the General Service category to undertake tasks related to information and communication technologies (ICT). Ms Hansa Gennoo was recruited as an ICT Expert in February 2026.
33. **The MoP NOTED the summary of intersessional decisions taken since MoP12.**

Agenda item 4 – Compliance Committee (CC) and report of the CC10

4.1 Presentation of the report of the 10th Compliance Committee

34. The CC Chairperson, Mrs Meera Koonjul (Mauritius), presented a summary of the report of CC10, which was held at Savoy Seychelles Resort & Spa, Beau Vallon, Seychelles, on 1–3 July 2026. The CC10 report is available as MoP-13-17.
35. The MoP reviewed the advice and recommendations of the CC10 report.

4.2 SIOFA Compliance Report (SCR)

36. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 40 of the CC10 report regarding the CC's adoption of the provisional Compliance Report (pSCR).**
37. The Compliance Officer, Mr Johnny Louys, presented the pSCR adopted by the CC, as described in MoP-13-18 and outlined the decisions of the CC10 on the provisional compliance status for each CCP, for review by the MoP.
38. **The MoP ADOPTED the final SIOFA Compliance Report outlined in Annex G.**

4.3 Listing of IUU fishing vessels

39. The Compliance Officer presented the Provisional IUU Vessel List (MoP-13-16), explaining that no vessels had been proposed for inclusion on the draft SIOFA IUU vessel list.
40. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 130 of the CC10 report that no vessels had been proposed for inclusion on the draft SIOFA IUU vessel list.**
41. **The MoP NOTED the CC's recommendation in paragraph 132 of the CC10 report and ENDORSED the proposed modifications to the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List to reflect the most recent changes from other RFMOs, as shown in CC-10-04-Rev1 (MoP-13-04-Rev1).**
42. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 133 of the CC10 report that the MoP remove *FU HSIANG FA* from the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List based on the vessel's removal from the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) IUU Vessel List in 2024.**
43. **The MoP AGREED to remove *FU HSIANG FA* from the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List.**
44. **The MoP ADOPTED the SIOFA IUU Vessel List (Annex H).**
45. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 134 of the CC10 report and AGREED**

that the CC's proposed changes to the current SIOFA IUU Vessel List be made with immediate effect after adoption by the MoP.

4.4 Recommendations from the Compliance Committee on current SIOFA CMMs

46. The MoP NOTED paragraph 47 of the CC10 report regarding potential ambiguities in the current wording of CMM 18(2025) (Benthic Fishery Closures (BFCs)) and the scope of application of paragraph 6 of the CMM. The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 5.1.5.
47. The MoP NOTED paragraph 49 of the CC10 report that the introduction of a new definition for benthopelagic trawls (proposed under paragraph 209, SC11 Report) may have ramifications for CCPs interpreting the applicability of CMMs and NOTED the CC's request for clarity as to which CMMs would apply to benthopelagic trawls, if this new definition were adopted. The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 5.1.5.
48. The MoP NOTED the CC's endorsement, in paragraphs 56 and 57 of the CC10 report, of the SC's proposed amendments to CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) (Annex D, SC11 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
49. The MoP NOTED paragraph 63 of the CC10 report regarding China's proposal to amend CMM 10(2023) (Monitoring) (Annex E, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
50. The MoP NOTED paragraph 69 of the CC10 report regarding Mauritius' proposal to amend CMM 11(2020) (Compliance Monitoring Scheme) (Annex F, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
51. The MoP NOTED paragraph 78 of the CC10 report regarding Mauritius' proposal for an alternate method for collecting data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) on Data Standards and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
52. The MoP NOTED paragraph 80 of the CC10 report regarding Australia's proposal to amend CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks) (Annex H, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
53. The MoP NOTED paragraph 86 of the CC10 report regarding the EU's proposal to amend CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks) (Annex I, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
54. The MoP NOTED paragraph 94 of the CC10 report regarding Japan's proposal to amend Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) (Annex J, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.
55. The MoP NOTED paragraph 97 of the CC10 report regarding Mauritius' proposal to amend Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) (Annex K, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.

4.5 Operationalization of the SIOFA VMS

4.5.1 Update of Workplan & Progress Toward Operationalization of the SIOFA VMS

56. On behalf of the Chairperson of the SIOFA VMS Working Group (VMS-WG), Ms Fiona Harford, the Compliance Officer presented MoP-13-10, which provided an update on the progress made by the VMS WG since MoP12. The VMS WG held four intersessional meetings, which resulted in the following conclusions: adoption of the Pilot Phase for the SIOFA VMS, completion of work related to the consideration of the use of the SIOFA VMS for the submission of entry and exit notifications, and review of CMM 16(2025) (VMS) in relation to possible amendments to the North Atlantic Format (NAF) messages data elements in Annex 2 of the CMM and Annex 1 of the SIOFA VMS standards, specifications and procedures (SSPs). Following the recommendations put forward by the Selection Panel for the SIOFA VMS, the Secretariat completed the procurement process for the SIOFA VMS,

which resulted in the awarding of a contract to Collecte Localisation Satellites (CLS) as the provider of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) VMS services to SIOFA for a period of thirty-six (36) months, commencing in January 2026. CLS has undertaken the set-up of the SIOFA VMS and provided training to SIOFA staff in the use and administration of the system. The Pilot Phase for the SIOFA Vessel Monitoring System was also completed and the detailed outcomes are described in MoP-13-INFO-01. Based on the outcomes of the pilot phase, the VMS is considered to be operationally ready for its entry into operation, subject to endorsement of the CC and the MoP, and automated entry and exit reporting under the SIOFA VMS is considered to be technically feasible, under certain conditions. In addition, the Secretariat successfully completed a second scoping mission concerning the VMS of other RFMOs, this time with the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) Secretariat.

57. **The MoP NOTED the progress made by the VMS WG towards the operationalization of the SIOFA VMS.**
58. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 150 of the CC10 report and AGREED on the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS, immediately after the conclusion of MoP13.**
59. The MoP expressed its appreciation to the VMS WG for its efforts, to Ms Fiona Harford for her leadership as the VMS WG Chairperson, and to the Secretariat, particularly the Compliance Officer, for their support for the work to establish and enter the SIOFA VMS into operation.
60. The MoP also expressed its gratitude to the European Union for providing substantial funding to support the development and pilot of the SIOFA VMS.
61. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to continue closely monitoring the operation of the VMS, including any technical, operational, or implementation issues that may arise as additional parties and vessels come online, as well as to provide annual reports to the CC and the MoP on the operation and performance of the VMS.**

4.5.2 Potential Amendments to SIOFA CMMs and the Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs) for the SIOFA VMS

62. On behalf of the VMS WG Chair, the Compliance Officer presented MoP-13-11-Rev2, which provided potential amendments to CMMs and the SIOFA SSPs to support the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS as discussed by the VMS WG. He explained that the CC had developed the original VMS WG proposal further and recommended that the MoP adopt the latest version of the proposal.
63. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 156 of the CC10 report and ADOPTED the amendments to CMM 10(2023) (Monitoring), CMM 16(2025) (VMS), and the SIOFA VMS SSPs to support the entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS (Annex I).**

4.6 Other recommendations from the Compliance Committee

64. The Compliance Officer explained that pursuant to paragraph 5 of CMM 11(2020) (Compliance Monitoring Scheme) the CC and the MoP are required to review any other recommendations made by the MoP in the previous years' Final Compliance Reports. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-13-09, which provided the status of the implementation of the recommendations of MoP12 on the SIOFA Final Compliance Report (fSCR), as updated by CC10.
65. **The MoP NOTED the status of the implementation of the recommendations from MoP12 outlined in MoP-13-09.**
66. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 102 of the CC10 report regarding China's proposal for a new CMM for Fishery Independent Research Cruise in the SIOFA Area (Annex L, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 10.**

67. The MoP NOTED paragraph 109 of the CC10 report regarding the Cook Islands' proposal for a new CMM for a SIOFA Allocation Framework (Annex M, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 11.
68. The MoP NOTED paragraph 113 of the CC10 report regarding the EU's proposal for a new CMM for Research Cruise by Research Vessel in the SIOFA Area (Annex N, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 11.
69. The MoP NOTED paragraph 117 of the CC10 report regarding the EU's proposal for a new CMM for Scientific Research by Fishing Vessel in the SIOFA Area (Annex O, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 11.
70. The MoP NOTED paragraph 124 of the CC10 report regarding France (OT)'s proposal for a new CMM on promoting the objectives of SIOFA through cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement (Annex P, CC10 Report) and held further discussions under agenda item 11.
71. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 128 of the CC10 report for an SC review of encounter thresholds.
72. The MoP NOTED paragraph 158 of the CC10 report regarding the renewal of Comoros' CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 15.
73. The MoP NOTED paragraph 162 of the CC10 report regarding the renewal of India's CNCP status and held further discussions under agenda item 15.
74. The MoP NOTED paragraph 174 of the CC10 report regarding potential options for addressing capacity needs related to compliance and straddling themes and held further discussions under agenda item 12.
75. The MoP NOTED paragraphs 175 and 176 of the CC10 report regarding the recruitment of a consultant to prepare a Capacity Building Action Plan and held further discussions under agenda item 12.
76. The MoP NOTED paragraph 179 of the CC10 report regarding the CC's input and the current status of the implementation plan for the SIOFA Performance Review Panel recommendations and held further discussions under agenda item 13.1.1.
77. The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 190 of the CC10 report to reduce the default duration of CC meetings from three days to two days and held further discussions under agenda item 18.

4.6.1 Discussion on the CC ToRs

78. The MoP considered the CC's discussions in paragraphs 185–189 of the CC10 report regarding the streamlining of the CC's work, the division of functions between the CC and the MoP, and the potential need to amend the CC's terms of reference (ToR).
79. **The MoP AGREED that the CC's work could be streamlined so as to focus only on recommendations and proposals that have compliance-related aspects. The MoP NOTED that this could require an amendment to the ToR and that any proposal to amend the CC's ToR would need to be submitted to the next CC and MoP meetings. The MoP encouraged CCPs to develop proposals to amend the CC's ToR, if appropriate, and AGREED that, in the meantime, the CC could already implement the streamlined approach in practice.**
80. Pew expressed support for the proposed streamlining of the CC's work and discussions, while urging CCPs to allow some flexibility so as to enable the CC to be able to discuss any SC recommendations or CCP proposal that contains compliance aspects, even if they were not initially identified as being relevant to the CC by the SC or the proponent.
81. **Following its review, the MoP ADOPTED the CC10 report.**

Agenda item 5 – Scientific Committee (SC) and Report of the SC11

5.1 Presentation of the report of the 11th Annual Meeting of the SIOFA Scientific Committee (SC11)

82. The SC Chairperson, Mr Alistair Dunn, presented a summary of the report of SC11, which was held in Fremantle, Australia, on 23–31 March 2026. A summary of the recommendations and relevant annexes of the SC11 report is available as MoP-13-05-Rev1.

5.1.1 Fisheries reports

83. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 61 of the SC11 report, NOTED the revised guidelines for the Submission of Annual National Reports given in SC-11-INFO-01-Rev1, and TASKED the Secretariat to make it available on the SIOFA website.**
84. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 71 of the SC11 report, ENDORSED the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries 2026 (SC-11-14-Rev2), and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.**
85. The MoP considered the request in paragraph 75 of the SC11 report for clarification on the scope of the application of paragraph 6 of CMM 18(2025) (BFCs) and whether reporting requirements for vessels engaging in fishing within a BFC applied to all fisheries or only bottom fisheries.
86. Several CCPs were of the view that CMM 18(2025) (BFCs) primarily applies to bottom fisheries, as stated in paragraph 2 of the CMM. However, they considered that the reporting requirements under paragraph 6 applied to all vessels conducting fishing activities in a BFC and that the reason for such reporting is the need to understand any activities occurring in or around the BFC. These CCPs acknowledged that there is some ambiguity in how the CMM is currently written and suggested that a footnote could be added to paragraph 2 to clarify that it applies to all paragraphs except paragraph 6.
87. Chinese Taipei considered that CMM 18(2025) applied to bottom fisheries only and that it would therefore be inappropriate to treat paragraph 6 as applying to all fisheries.
88. The MoP held further discussions on CMM 18(2025) under agenda item 10.
89. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 79 of the SC11 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Ecosystem Summary 2026 (SC-11-15-Rev2), and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it available on the SIOFA website.**
90. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 277 of the SC11 report, ENDORSED the SIOFA Fisheries Summary: Toothfish 2026, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it, with confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.**
91. **The MoP AGREED that going forward, the SC need not seek the endorsement of the MoP for the Overview of SIOFA Fisheries, SIOFA Ecosystem Summary, and individual fisheries summaries it develops, nor for tasking the Secretariat to make public versions of them, with any confidential information removed, available on the SIOFA website.**
92. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 284 of the SC11 report regarding the oilfish fisheries summary, NOTED that there had been only minor revisions to the working draft during the intersessional review process, ENDORSED the Fisheries Summary: oilfish (*Ruvettus pretiosus*) and escolar (*Lepidocybium flavobrunneum*) 2026, and TASKED the Secretariat to make a public version of it available on the SIOFA website.**

5.1.2 Data Standards, Access and Dissemination

93. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 124 of the SC11 report to amend CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards).**
94. The MoP held further discussions on the proposed amendments under agenda item 10 and requested that the Secretariat prepare a separate document with the proposed amendments for transparency and to facilitate the MoP's review.
95. **The MoP recalled its previous discussions on the process for considering amendments to**

CMMs proposed by the SC and NOTED that there has been a lack of clarity. The MoP AGREED that:

- a. the Secretariat should not submit proposals for amending CMMs to the MoP,
- b. the SC could recommend proposed amendments to CMM language and should submit them to the MoP as part of the SC report and recommendations, rather than as a proposal paper by the SC,
- c. the MoP may need to review any amendments proposed by the SC to a CMM in an independent document before adoption,
- d. the Secretariat may, at the request of the MoP, extract the proposed amendments from the SC report and recommendations and present them, on behalf of the SC, in a separate document for the MoP's review.

5.1.3 SIOFA Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment

96. The MoP NOTED paragraph 136 of the SC11 report and NOTED the Scientific Committee Checklist for SIOFA BFIA Evaluation according to the SIOFA BFIA Standard.

5.1.4 SIOFA Precautionary Approach and Management (PAM)

97. The SC Chairperson introduced MoP-13-INFO-09, which provided an overview of the SIOFA Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF) and the SC's related recommendations. The SIOFA PAF was developed by the SC in response to Recommendation 10 of the 2023 SIOFA Performance Review. It provides a consistent, science-based system for managing fisheries across SIOFA's diverse portfolio, built around three components: information classification, three-zone stock status, and tiered management procedures. SC11 endorsed the Framework and made a number of recommendations to the MoP, including its formal adoption and an indicative workplan for implementation.
98. The PAM Project consultant, Ms Kerrie Robertson (Adira Consulting), provided a detailed overview of the draft Precautionary Approach Framework for the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA), delivered under Project PAM-2024-01. The Framework was designed around five principles: scientific rigour, future-proofing, covering the whole SIOFA portfolio of fisheries, equity activation, and clear governance. The Framework comprises two interrelated documents: a Conceptual Framework setting out the policy architecture and Technical Guidelines providing an operational manual for implementation. The Framework draws on international literature and comparable frameworks from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), Canada, Australia, and New Zealand where relevant, while recognising that no existing framework fully addresses SIOFA's context. The Framework has been designed to fulfil SIOFA's obligations under Article 4(c) of the Agreement, which requires the application of the precautionary approach in accordance with the 1995 Agreement and the FAO Code of Conduct. It directly addresses recommendations from the SIOFA Performance Review and provides a structured basis for the MoP to discharge its functions under Article 10. The Framework is built around three integrated components: an Information Classification System that categorises stocks into four tiers (High, Medium, Low, and Zero Information) based on data quantity, quality, and breadth; a Three-Zone Stock Status System (Green, Amber, and Red) that defines management responses relative to biological reference points; and a tiered Management Procedure system (Tier 1: full quantitative; Tier 2: simplified empirical; and Tier 3: qualitative / knowledge-based, which is a novel approach) providing operationally feasible approaches across the full spectrum of SIOFA's fisheries. A key design feature of this Framework is the explicit and substantive treatment of low- and zero-information stocks as the operational norm for SIOFA rather than as peripheral cases. The Technical Guidelines operationalise each component of the

Conceptual Framework, including guidance for each tier of management procedures, and alternative management arrangements if no management procedure is possible. The Technical Guidelines include a novel operational checklist that translates information classification criteria into assessable indicators. The checklist is designed to support consistent, evidence-based classification while retaining the expert judgement essential for a portfolio as diverse as SIOFA's. Given the tool's novel nature and the significant variation across different species and fisheries types, the checklist itself requires review by the SC before application to specific stocks. If the Framework were to be adopted, or adopted in principle, it would represent a direction of travel, not a requirement to implement everything at once. The aim of the Framework is to provide a principled, documented, proportionate response to every stock in the portfolio, within the limits of resources and information available.

99. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 163 of the SC11 report and NOTED that work provided in the PAM-2024-01, PAM-2024-02, and PAM-2024-03 projects provided a strong scientific basis for advancing a precautionary approach to fisheries management within SIOFA.**
100. The MoP thanked the consultants for their comprehensive and high-quality work.
101. The MoP thanked the EU for funding this valuable work.
102. The Secretariat informed the MoP that more details about the SIOFA-PAM projects are available at <https://siofa.org/eu-grants/SIOFA-PAM>; the PAM-2024-01 project page is available at <https://siofa.org/science/sc-works/PAM-2024-01>; and the final PAM-2024-01 project report is available at https://siofa.org/sites/default/files/sc_works/SIOFA-PAM-2024-01-Final-Report.pdf.
103. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 165 of the SC11 report and ENDORSED the principles of the SIOFA PAF, noting that it would be premature to fully adopt the SIOFA PAF before further discussions by the SC and the MoP.**
104. **The MoP ENDORSED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 167 of the SC11 report and AGREED to endorse the indicative workplan for the adoption of management procedures (Annex J); develop a detailed workplan with clear tasks, timelines, and responsibilities; and regularly update the workplan, including with input from the SC.**
105. **The MoP NOTED the request in paragraph 168 of the SC11 report and AGREED that the level of resourcing that is envisioned for the development and adoption of management procedures is likely to be similar to the current level and REQUESTED the SC to take this into account when developing its procedures.**
106. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 169 of the SC11 report and:**
 - a. **ENDORSED the holding of a two-day workshop on SIOFA-PAM-related work in late 2026 or early 2027, which will consider the recommendations from the SIOFA-PAM projects and consolidate advice to SC12 on next steps, workplans, and an implementation plan for PAM, taking into account any decisions from MoP13,**
 - b. **TASKED the SC to work in conjunction with the Secretariat at the workshop on SIOFA-PAM-related work and at SC12 to develop a template for presenting SC advice to the MoP,**
 - c. **ENDORSED the holding of a one-day MoP-SC joint workshop between the SC and the MoP in 2027 to consider the outcomes of the SC's work and provide preliminary advice to the MoP and CCPs, thereby facilitating further discussions on ways forward at MoP14,**
 - d. **TASKED the MoP Chairperson and the SC Chairperson to develop ToRs for the MoP-SC joint workshop well in advance of the workshop,**
 - e. **TASKED the Secretariat to ensure that documents are submitted well in advance**

to the MoP-SC joint workshop and ensure that the documents are very clear in what they are recommending and what input and decisions are being sought from managers.

107. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 170 of the SC11 report and NOTED the SC's intention to delay the implementation of management procedure-related work for 12 months and to identify key parts of any consultancy starting in 2027–2028, if required.**

5.1.5 Stock assessments and advice

108. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 209 of the SC11 report and NOTED the definition and description of benthopelagic trawls in Annex H of the SC11 report.**

109. Australia supported the new definition and its use to reclassify midwater trawl where benthopelagic trawl gears are flown close to the seabed and have occasional and unintentional contact with the bottom. Australia considered this to be a good example of SIOFA applying more accurate and nuanced definition to the gear types used in SIOFA.

110. Mauritius noted that the definition and description developed by the SC was very long and technical and could be confusing. Mauritius suggested that a gear definition would typically be shorter and simpler.

111. The Cook Islands explained that the SC had developed the definition and description in this particular format because it is the format used by the FAO, that the definition draws specifically from language in the FAO's existing definitions for midwater and bottom trawls, and that the definition of benthopelagic trawls is inherently complicated as it is in-between these two types of gear. The Cook Islands acknowledged that perhaps SIOFA could also have a shorter, informal definition of benthopelagic trawl fishing for use in communication with fishers.

112. SIOFA supported the differentiation between true midwater trawling and benthopelagic trawls and pointed out that its members have always fished in these two different ways. SIOFA noted that the core characteristic of a benthopelagic trawl is trawling with a midwater net diving toward the seafloor, which has an intrinsic risk of interacting with benthic organisms. For this reason, SIOFA members have never fished in the BFCs, or the prior BPAs. SIOFA suggested that a shorthand definition of benthopelagic fishing for CCPs could be "trawling with a midwater net diving toward the sea floor".

113. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 213 of the SC11 report and AGREED to reclassify any mid-water trawl using the algorithm agreed by the SC (Annex I, SC11 Report) where benthopelagic trawl gears are flown close to the seabed, typically between 6–50 metres, and do not have sustained seabed contact but infrequent unintended seabed contact can occur (as further elaborated in Annex H, SC11 Report).**

114. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation, in paragraph 216 of the SC11 report, to prohibit the conducting of benthopelagic trawls in the SIOFA BFCs as this gear may occasionally contact the sea bottom.**

115. Japan noted that the analysis of benthopelagic trawls was only recently presented to SC11 and that further scientific refinement of the algorithm by the SC is likely. Japan noted that the priority, at this stage, in using the algorithm should be to improve SIOFA's understanding of benthopelagic trawls and their characteristics. Japan further noted that the primary purpose of the use of the algorithm to reclassify mid-water trawls, as discussed at the SC, was to aid stock assessment and catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) standardisation and Japan supported its use for this purpose, while noting that further consideration is needed before determining the implications for CMMs. At the same time, Japan recognised the importance of the precautionary approach and supported the SC's recommendation to prohibit the conducting of benthopelagic trawls in BFCs in principle based on the

- precautionary approach until such a time that the SC advises otherwise.
116. The MoP convened a small benthopelagic working group for the discussion and consideration of MoP-13-INFO-23, an information paper prepared by the Secretariat at the request of CC10. The paper highlighted the existing CMM paragraphs for which there may be implications of the new definition if midwater trawls are reclassified as benthopelagic trawls and prohibited within BFCs as bottom fishing gear. Following its discussions, the working group provided an update to the MoP.
 117. **The MoP NOTED the working group provided input to the Secretariat for a revision of MoP-13-INFO-23.**
 118. **The MoP NOTED the working group considered the definition of bottom fishing in CMM 01(2025) paragraph 3b and that it suggested that this definition did not apply to benthopelagic trawl, which does not have sustained deliberate bottom contact with the seafloor.**
 119. **The MoP NOTED that the working group recognised the importance of the precautionary approach and suggested that although benthopelagic trawl was not a bottom fishing method, it did have unintended seabed contact and should be considered in the development or update of BFIA's.**
 120. **The MoP NOTED that the working group suggested a BFIA for benthopelagic trawling should not be retrospectively applied to CCPs.**
 121. **The MoP NOTED that the working group reiterated the SC advice that benthopelagic trawling should not occur in BFCs, until such time as the MoP has received a recommendation from the SC.**
 122. **The MoP NOTED that the working group further recognised that the SC's definition (SC11 Annex H) and algorithm to distinguish benthopelagic trawl is likely to be further refined and CCPs may need additional time to understand the application of the algorithm.**
 123. **The MoP NOTED that the working group recommended, to support the implementation and in the interest of the precautionary approach, that the MoP prohibit the conducting of all trawl methods in the SIOFA BFCs until such time the MoP has received a recommendation from the SC based on the testing of the benthopelagic assessment algorithm.**
 124. **The MoP NOTED that the working group suggested that the MoP task the Secretariat with further developing a document assessing the implications of the new definition on existing CMMs and provide it to SC12 and CC11, with consideration of their role, and MoP14 for consideration.**
 125. **To support implementation and in the interest of the precautionary approach, the MoP AGREED to prohibit the conducting of all trawl methods in the SIOFA BFCs until such time the MoP has received a recommendation from the SC based on the testing of the benthopelagic assessment algorithm.**
 126. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat with further developing a document assessing the implications of the new definition on existing CMMs and provide it to SC12 and CC11, within consideration of their role, and MoP14 for consideration.**
 127. The EU drew the MoP's attention to paragraph 218 of the SC11 report. The paragraph, in essence, states that more recent ageing research shows strong evidence for an older-age scenario for alfonsino, indicating a more than two-fold increase in longevity, which will need to be reflected in the next stock assessment for this species. The EU pointed out that this indicates that alfonsino is a more sensitive species than was previously believed and called for stronger management of this species.
 128. The Cook Islands pointed out that it has committed to ageing a further 500 otoliths based

on the method described in paragraph 218 of the SC11 report. If this work is successful, the Cook Islands will further expand the use of this methodology and apply it to historical otolith samples.

129. Japan informed the MoP that it is also collecting otoliths and conducting ageing work. Japan also pointed out that the SC workplan includes several projects that will contribute to the alfonso stock assessment, including ageing projects. Japan noted that some of the progress and outcomes from these projects should contribute to developing management measures for the alfonso fishery.
130. China noted that the 2025 Nansen research cruise in the Agreement Area has also collected alfonso otoliths that could contribute to further ageing work.
131. **The MoP ENDORSED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 226 of the SC11 report and REQUESTED all CCPs who fish for alfonso to routinely collect length and otolith samples using the same random sampling methodology.**
132. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 255 of the SC11 report to set the 2026–27 season catch limit for the WR Management Area at 112 t, being 0.8 x the 2025–26 season catch limit, based on the catch trend analysis rules.** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
133. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 263 of the SC11 report to adopt a modified version of paragraph 21 of CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks), as follows: "Longlines shall not exceed 3000 hooks per line. Each vessel shall ensure that longlines are set at a minimum distance of 3 nautical miles from any other longlines previously set by the same vessel during the ongoing fishing trip."** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
134. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 264 of the SC11 report to adopt a modified version of paragraph 14 of CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks) as follows: "... A minimum overlap statistic of at least 60% shall apply for tag release, once 30 or more *Dissostichus* spp. specimens have been caught. However, members are encouraged to achieve an overlap of 80%. Members with vessels achieving an overlap between 60 and 80% shall report to the SC for review, in order to better understand the factors causing the lower tag overlap statistic."** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
135. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 265 of the SC11 report to adopt a modified version of Annex A (Vessel Catch and Effort Data) in CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) to include the number of species retained and discarded among the data that shall be collected, so that overlap statistics can be calculated.** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
136. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 266 of the SC11 report to set a catch limit of 52.8 t, being 1.2 x the 2025–26 season catch limit, for the DCR Management Area for the 2026–27 season, based on the Chapman biomass estimate.** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
137. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 271 of the SC11 report to set a catch limit of 66.7 t for the proposed SIR Management Area for the 2026–27 season, which is 0.8 x the catch limit recommended by SC10 (83.4 t), given that fishing has taken place in the last five years but insufficient tag recaptures had been observed to use the Chapman mark-recapture biomass estimate and that there was a decreasing trend in the CPUE-by-seabed analogy biomass estimates.** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
138. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 298 of the SC11 report and NOTED that the spatial extent of**

China's historical squid jigging fishery spans all SIOFA Subareas.

139. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 299 of the SC11 report and NOTED that, in light of the spatial extent of China's historical squid-fishing in the SIOFA Area and biological research on the same species from an adjacent area to the SIOFA Area, and the fact that squid are a mobile species, this may be a straddling stock.**
140. China agreed with the SC's view that squid is a mobile species and that further comprehensive study is necessary. However, China emphasised that SIOFA's jurisdiction must not extend beyond the Agreement Area.

5.1.6 Bycatch and incidental captures

141. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 336 of the SC11 report and NOTED that several non-contracting parties have made significant catches of SIOFA species that have not been reported to SIOFA.**
142. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 337 of the SC11 report and NOTED that several CCPs are reporting catch of SIOFA species to the IOTC but not to SIOFA.**
143. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 338 of the SC11 report and considered the SC's request for CCPs that are members of the IOTC to request that the IOTC improve bycatch reporting and species identification.**
144. Some CCPs expressed their recognition of the importance of being able to receive improved bycatch reporting with improved species identification from the IOTC but noted that the IOTC has its own priorities that it will focus on.
145. The IOTC echoed the point raised by these CCPs, explaining that there is debate as to whether oilfish is a target or bycatch fishery and that the request in paragraph 338 of the SC11 report could be seen as requesting the IOTC to improve data collection and reporting to cover species that are not part of the IOTC's responsibility. The IOTC also clarified that it does receive species-specific information from the oilfish fisheries and that it does share data with SIOFA.
146. Chinese Taipei noted that it submits data to both IOTC and SIOFA for its pelagic longline fishery.
147. **The MoP encouraged CCPs that are members of the IOTC to work through the IOTC to improve the IOTC's bycatch reporting and species identification, while being cognisant of the IOTC's own priorities.**
148. Mauritius highlighted the importance of mechanisms to enable a better understanding of incidental catches occurring within the overlapping areas of competence of SIOFA and the IOTC, such as formal data sharing arrangements, harmonised reporting requirements, joint scientific assessments and mutually agreed criteria, and distinguishing incidental catches from direct fishing.
149. The IOTC recalled previous efforts to establish an agreement for formal cooperation between SIOFA and IOTC, explaining that the IOTC falls under the FAO and has no legal identity, so any formal agreement needed to be concluded between SIOFA and the FAO, rather than between SIOFA and the IOTC, which necessitated particular legal language and requirements that SIOFA was not comfortable with. The IOTC suggested that one way forward, which it has recently explored, is for SIOFA to conclude a generic memorandum of understanding with the FAO, and then to develop a more detailed workplan directly with the IOTC.
150. The EU highlighted the need for SIOFA to better understand CCPs' oilfish fisheries, noting that this is the most harvested SIOFA species in the Agreement Area and that there is currently a lack of information available on these fisheries to CCPs that are not participating in them. In particular, the EU noted that it remains unclear whether CCPs that harvest

oilfish consider that oilfish is bycatch of tuna fisheries, tuna is bycatch of oilfish fisheries, or this is a true mixed fishery targeting both tuna and oilfish. The EU also noted that SIOFA has no management measures in place for oilfish and that it is difficult to develop management measures for a fishery that is not well understood. The EU suggested that the MoP should request CCPs that are actively harvesting oilfish to present substantive information regarding the characterisation of their oilfish fisheries at SC12. The EU also noted that in terms of the capture of other IOTC species, these fisheries take catches of tuna and also pelagic sharks. If the oilfish fisheries are a target fishery or part of a mixed fisheries, the taking of large amounts of pelagic shark by SIOFA vessels would become an issue that SIOFA would be responsible for. The EU suggested that good examples to follow would be the toothfish fishery characterisation provided by the EU and France (OT) in SC-08-INFO-17 or the orange roughy fishery characterisation provided by the Cook Islands in SC-08-INFO-14.

151. Chinese Taipei stated that it has submitted data from its oilfish fishery to the SC in its annual reports and that it has conducted and continues to update its CPUE standardisation work related to its oilfish fishery to enable other CCPs to better understand this fishery. Chinese Taipei considered that it has fulfilled all its commitments and obligations.
152. The EU noted that while this is not an obligation, all CCPs have a responsibility to cooperate and to take shared responsibility for the management of SIOFA species. The EU reiterated that oilfish is the most harvested SIOFA species, that other CCPs have little understanding of the fishery, and that there are no management measures in place for it. The EU also pointed out that it was not requesting any sensitive data and was making a normal request for a detailed description of the fishery, similar to the descriptions that other CCPs have provided voluntarily.
153. The SC Chairperson noted that Chinese Taipei is conducting SC project OIL-2027-01, which involves updating its oilfish and escolar CPUE standardisation work, and suggested that the project description could be adjusted to include information relevant to a characterisation of Chinese Taipei's oilfish fishery.
154. **The MoP NOTED the strong commitment of CCPs with vessels targeting oilfish to undertake the following for SC12's consideration:**
 - a. **Characterise the OIL/LEC fishery in the SIOFA Area, summarising trends in catch, effort, and unstandardised CPUE by CCP, subarea, and gear, and distinguishing directed pelagic longline catch from bycatch reported in other target fisheries.**
 - b. **Summarise available length/size composition data for OIL and LEC by subarea and fleet, and assess whether current data are adequate to support future characterisation of size structure.**

5.1.7 Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME)

155. SC11 did not provide any recommendations on VME.

5.1.8 Benthic Fisheries Closures CMM 18(2025) and marine protected areas

156. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 370 of the SC11 report and TASKED the Secretariat to submit the SIOFA BFCs to the World Data Base on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), NOTING that the SIOFA BFCs are good examples of area-based management measures developed through cooperation between an RFMO and industry stakeholders.**

5.1.9 New and Exploratory Fisheries CMM 17(2025)

157. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 376 of the SC11 report, NOTED that the SC considered Thailand's proposed research cruise to be a useful contribution to SIOFA's science, and NOTED that the SC supported Thailand undertaking this research.**

158. The MoP considered Thailand's proposed research cruise under agenda item 7.3.2.
159. The Joint Commission of the JMA, consisting of Mauritius and Seychelles, thanked Thailand for presenting its proposed research cruise plan for the Saya de Malha Bank and acknowledged the valuable contributions that marine scientific research can make. Mauritius and Seychelles have consistently supported marine scientific research and international scientific cooperation, particularly where such activities contribute to evidence-based management and the sustainable use of ocean resources. At the same time, Mauritius and Seychelles recalled that the Saya de Malha Bank is located within the JMA established by their two States pursuant to the Treaty concerning the Joint Exercise of Sovereign Rights over the Continental Shelf in the Mascarene Plateau Region. Within this area, Mauritius and Seychelles jointly exercise sovereign rights over the continental shelf and its resources in accordance with international law, including the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In this regard, while noting the scientific objectives of the proposed research cruise, Mauritius and Seychelles emphasised that any marine scientific research activities undertaken within the JMA should be conducted in conformity with the applicable legal and regulatory framework established by the two States. They invited Thailand to engage with the Joint Commission to seek the necessary authorisations in accordance with the relevant legislation governing marine scientific research in the JMA. Such engagement would facilitate scientific cooperation, transparency, data sharing and mutual benefit while ensuring full respect for the rights and responsibilities of the two coastal States under UNCLOS. Mauritius and Seychelles stated that they remain open to constructive scientific partnerships and looked forward to continued collaboration with Thailand and other SIOFA Members in advancing marine science and sustainable ocean governance in the Southern Indian Ocean.
160. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 379 of the SC11 report and NOTED the revised Fisheries Operation Plan Checklist (Annex L, SC11 Report).**
161. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 387 of the SC11 report and NOTED that Mauritius has submitted catch data and other information from its alfonsino mid-water and benthopelagic trawl fishery to the SC as requested by MoP12 (MoP12 Report, para 216).**
162. **The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation in paragraph 388 of the SC11 report to include Mauritius as a participant in the fishery targeting alfonsino with mid-water and benthopelagic trawl in Annex 1 (Established fisheries in the SIOFA Area) of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries).** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
163. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 391 of the SC11 report and REQUESTED that CCPs fishing for alfonsino collect standardised length frequency data as well as otolith samples and coordinate a standardised collection protocol.**
164. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 393 of the SC11 report to adopt the SC's proposed amendments to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries).** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 10.
- 5.1.10 Framework for research cruises and scientific research in the SIOFA Area**
165. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 434. The MoP NOTED the SC's recommendation that the MoP continue its efforts to establish a CMM for research cruises and scientific research, as well as the SC's recommendation that the CMM should set out one process for approving research cruises by vessels flagged to CCPs and the data submission requirements for those cruises, and another process for approving research cruises by vessels flagged to non-CCPs and the data submission requirements for those cruises.** The MoP held further discussions under agenda item 11.

5.1.11 Scientific Observers

166. The MoP discussed paragraph 442 of the SC11 report, which indicated that SIOFA has already adopted electronic monitoring (EM) standards for pelagic longliners, but confirmed that SIOFA has not in fact done so.
167. **The MoP ENDORSED the application of the EM standards for pelagic longliners set out in IOTC Resolution 23/08 to pelagic longliners in SIOFA.**
168. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 445 and considered the SC's request for clarification about the overall objectives of the SIOFA EM programme, including whether the data could also be used for compliance purposes.**
169. **The MoP AGREED that the SIOFA EM programme is primarily intended for the collection of data for scientific purposes, as an alternative to data collection by scientific observers. The MoP also AGREED that there should be no constraints on each CCP using data collected by EM for compliance purposes domestically.**

5.1.12 Future work

170. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 457 of the SC11 report, NOTED that the SC is undertaking work on assessing the vulnerability of SIOFA species and ecosystems to climate change impacts through Project CLI-2025-01, NOTED that the SC has reviewed a preliminary report at SC11, and NOTED the following key findings from the preliminary report:**
 - a. **The Indian Ocean is among the first ocean basins where compounding climate pressures will have detectable impacts on fish populations, while also being a highly under-studied ocean basin.**
 - b. **SIOFA species will face conditions that species in other basins have not yet encountered. The biological characteristics of many SIOFA species are such that it will be inherently difficult or impossible for them to cope with these conditions.**
 - c. **A shorter window for management responses applies across the full portfolio of SIOFA species, including species with lower fishing pressure and lower monitoring. A fishery that is not heavily fished is therefore not necessarily safe from climate risk. There is a risk that SIOFA will not detect changes until it is too late to respond. Therefore, SIOFA should equip itself to anticipate the change and plan management responses.**
171. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 458 of the SC11 report and ENDORSED the holding of an online workshop by the SC to consider the outcomes of the Project CLI-2025-01 final report and utilise the climate change risk assessment framework for several indicative trial species (WS2026 CLI).**
172. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 459 of the SC11 report and TASKED the SC with developing climate change indicators that should be regularly reported on and updated annually.**
173. **The MoP NOTED paragraph 475 of the SC11 report and NOTED that the SC had provided a summary of progress made in 2025 on the recommendations of the SIOFA Performance Review Panel that were adopted at MoP12 (SC-11-22-Rev1).**
174. **The MoP held further discussions on the recommendations of the SIOFA Performance Review Panel under agenda item 13.1.1.**
175. **The MoP NOTED the SC's request in paragraph 481 of the SC11 report for advice on whether to include projects aimed at capacity development for small island developing States (SIDS) in the scope of a potential consultancy to develop a capacity-building action plan.**
176. **The MoP held further discussions on capacity building under agenda item 12.**
177. **The MoP NOTED the recommendation in paragraph 498 of the SC11 report regarding the date and duration of the next SC meeting and held further discussions on 2027 meeting arrangements under agenda item 18.**

5.1.13 Other recommendations

178. The MoP NOTED paragraph 502 of the SC11 report and NOTED the 2026 recipients of the SIOFA Scientific Service Award: Yongchuang Shi (CHN), Weerapol Thitipongtrakul (THA), Steve Parker (Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)), Chong Sun (CHN), Chia-Chun Wu (TPE), Barry Weeber (DSCC), Trent Timmiss (AUS), and Alistair Dunn (SC Chairperson).
179. The MoP NOTED paragraph 513 of the SC11 report and NOTED that the SC agreed to re-elect Dr Zhou Fang (China) as an SC Vice-Chairperson.
180. Following its review, the MoP ADOPTED the SC11 report.
181. The DSCC introduced MoP-13-INFO-14, which outlined recent international resolutions reinforcing global commitments and international expectations for the protection of sea mount ecosystems and ecosystem integrity and biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. These include the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Resolution 8.032 and the decision by the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention for Migratory Species on conserving deep-sea ecosystems. The emergence of the BBNJ may also result in future obligations for SIOFA as it becomes operational. The DSCC urged the MoP to take note of these developments and the growing number of global imperatives to protect VMEs, including seamounts, given their importance for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem integrity in the Indian Ocean, and to fully implement the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions. The DSCC also urged the MoP to adopt a resolution and establish a working group to consider mechanisms necessary to align with future BBNJ needs. The DSCC also welcomed the SC's advice and recommendations on climate change and urged the MoP to urgently progress work to incorporate climate impacts into species and ecosystem assessments.
182. The DSCC introduced MoP-13-INFO-17, which provided a spatial overview of seamount ecosystems identified or inferred within the Agreement Area as a contribution towards strengthening protection of VMEs, including seamounts, from destructive fishing practices, given their importance for healthy ocean ecosystems and biodiversity. The DSCC said it intended to submit this information with a more detailed analysis to SC12, and encouraged CCPs to build on the information in its paper. The DSCC also suggested that the information it had provided would be sufficient to allow the development of a SIOFA database on individual seamounts, including their location, size and biodiversity.

Agenda item 6 – Climate change

6.1 Identification of advice required from Scientific Committee on the implications of climate change on SIOFA fisheries

183. No papers were presented under this agenda item.

Agenda item 7 – New and Exploratory Fisheries

7.1 New Fisheries

7.2 Exploratory Fisheries

184. The MoP NOTED that the SC did not receive any notifications or papers proposing new or exploratory fisheries.

7.3 Scientific Research

185. China presented MoP-13-30, which provided its draft research cruise plan for the 2026–2027 survey year. Building on its high seas resource cruises from 2023 to 2026, China intends to continue to conduct scientific surveys in the SIOFA Area from October 2026 to March 2027 in the area of 16°S–10°N and 60°E–68°E. Specifically, the surveys are aimed at

gaining a preliminary understanding of the species composition and quantity distribution of swimming organisms, plankton, fish eggs, and juvenile fish in the surveyed waters; grasping the physical marine environmental characteristics of the surveyed waters; and analysing the components of the pelagic marine ecosystems in the surveyed waters. China will submit the results of its research surveys to the SC.

186. The EU thanked China for providing the information and welcomed such potential contributions to science. However, the EU noted that China's research cruise plan differed greatly from that outlined in China's proposal for a new CMM for Fishery Independent Research Cruise in the SIOFA Area. The EU noted that it lacked scientific detail and seemed quite preliminary, lacking, for example, information about the vessels, gear specifications, catch and bycatch protocols, and detailed data submission arrangements. The EU also considered that the appropriate procedure would be to first provide the research cruise plan to the SC for a technical review and advice, as Thailand had done with its research cruise plan, and then for the MoP to endorse the plan or act on the SC's advice. The EU suggested that the MoP note the draft plan and request technical review by the SC before implementation, preferably through an intersessional process given the proposed October 2026 start date. The EU also noted that China has conducted research cruises in the Agreement Area in 2023 and 2024 as well and encouraged China to make these data available to SIOFA.
187. China responded that SIOFA does not currently have a template in place for research cruise plans and believed that proposals in any format would be acceptable. China explained that because this was a paper for MoP, it thought it would not be necessary to include technical details. China clarified that its intention was only to notify MoP that it would conduct such a research cruise. China acknowledged the procedural aspects and improvements suggested by the EU and expressed its intention to take these into account when developing its new CMM proposal further and when presenting plans for future research cruises to the SC.
188. The Joint Commission of the Seychelles-Mauritius JMA thanked China for its proposed research cruise plan and noted that the Saya de Malha Bank would be within the proposed research area. The Joint Commission welcomed the planned research cruise and invited China, at an appropriate stage, to engage with the Joint Commission to seek the necessary authorisations in accordance with the relevant legislation, which would facilitate scientific cooperation, transparency, data sharing and continued cooperation with China.
189. **The MoP NOTED China's draft plan for a research cruise in the SIOFA Area and the purpose of the research cruise, which is to collect scientific data for research on SIOFA species and their environment and marine ecosystems.**

7.3.1 Follow-up on scientific research activities by RV *Atlantida* in the SIOFA Area

190. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-13-INFO-06, which provided a follow-up report on the scientific research activities by the RV *Atlantida* in the SIOFA Area. As tasked by MoP12, the Executive Secretary wrote on 21 July 2025 to both the Head of the Expedition on the RV *Atlantida* and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to request a detailed explanation of the vessel's activities in the SIOFA Area and its further intentions. However, he did not receive a response. At the encouragement of MoP12, a CCP analysed automatic identification system (AIS) data for the RV *Atlantida* and determined that the vessel was scheduled to arrive at the Port of Maputo, Mozambique on 4 July 2025. On that basis, the CCP requested the authorities of Mozambique, as a SIOFA signatory and a Party to the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), to conduct an inspection of the vessel upon its arrival. The Mozambican authorities informed the CCP that the RV *Atlantida* entered the Port of

Maputo on 10 July 2025 and that an inspection was duly conducted. The authorities reported that: “The verification of all documents and fishing equipment on board concluded that the vessel was conducting oceanographic research and there was no indication of fishing activity, as the vessel is not equipped to carry out such operations”. At the recommendation of the aforementioned CCP, the Executive Secretary formally contacted the Mozambican authorities to request that the inspection results be transmitted to SIOFA, in accordance with Article 15 of the PSMA. However, he did not receive a response.

191. The MoP thanked the Secretariat for its extensive efforts to follow up on this matter.
192. Several CCPs noted that it was highly inappropriate for the research vessel to completely disregard the communication from the SIOFA Secretariat and to behave in this manner. They also noted that the adoption of a CMM for research cruises could prevent the occurrence of similar issues in the future.
193. The Cook Islands believed that once SIOFA has adopted such a CMM, it should take a strict and firm approach to the flag State of any vessel conducting actual or claimed research activities in the Agreement Area that are not in accordance with the CMM, primarily by listing the vessel on the SIOFA IUU Vessel List.
194. The EU explained that it was the CCP that had encouraged the Secretariat to contact Mozambique. The EU shared the information it had received, which was that the vessel was apparently inspected twice by Mozambique, and according to the partial information received, apparently there was no evidence to prove that the vessel engaged in illicit activities, the fishing nets contained no evidence to indicate that fishing had taken place, and the vessel indicated that it had been conducting oceanographic and hydrographic research.
195. **The MoP TASKED the Executive Secretary to write another official letter to Mozambique to seek to obtain the port inspection reports from Mozambique as a Party to the PSMA and, in doing so, to remind Mozambique of its commitments and responsibilities as a signatory to SIOFA.**
196. **The MoP TASKED the Executive Secretary to attempt to contact the Russian authorities again and to write official letters to the Russian representatives to FAO and to CCAMLR.**
197. The Executive Secretary indicated that he would send a Circular to the MoP with the draft letter and seek their input on it. He suggested that interested CCPs could send their own letters, using the draft letter as a basis, if they wished. He also requested that CCPs provide any other recommended or known contact person to whom the letters should be addressed.

7.3.2 Research cruise planned for Saya de Malha

198. Thailand presented MoP-13-INFO-18, which provided an overview of Thailand’s research cruise plan for the Saya de Malha Bank. The surveyed area will be divided into 12 stations covering the south part of the Saya de Malha Bank within SIOFA Subarea 8. The survey is expected to be conducted during the third or fourth quarter of 2027. R/V Mahidol is 62.53 metres in length with a gross tonnage of 1276. The fishing gears to be used include fish trap, bottom vertical longline, automatic squid jigging, and automatic fishing line, targeting demersal fishes (e.g., snappers and groupers), trevallies, and squids. Abundance and some biological parameters will be analysed. In addition to a fisheries resources survey, oceanographic data will be collected, and plankton and fish larvae will be identified. VMEs and endangered, threatened, and protected (ETP) species, if accidentally caught, will be identified and recorded.
199. Thailand shared additional details about its research cruise plan at the request of the

Seychelles, Mauritius, and the Joint Commission of the JMA.

200. **The MoP NOTED Thailand's research cruise plan for the Saya de Malha Bank.**

Agenda item 8 – Data access and dissemination

8.1 Data and security audits implementation update

201. The Data Officer, Mr Pierre Périès, presented MoP-13-13-Rev1, which summarised the data and security audit recommendations endorsed by the MoP, and provided an update on the implementation status of each recommendation. A few recommendations are still in progress or partially implemented and a few of them require the MoP and its subsidiary bodies to provide advice.
202. The Cook Islands suggested that the implementation would benefit from a clear and logical sequencing. It suggested that first, the MoP support finalising the governance framework through the endorsement of the Information System Security Policy (ISSP), while taking note of the accompanying risk analysis, which together provide the policy foundation for the remaining cybersecurity measures. Second, once that framework is in place, the focus should shift to building staff capability by establishing a cybersecurity awareness program for the Secretariat staff, together with more specialised training for staff with IT responsibilities. This should be done with a practical and cost-effective approach, making use of recognised online training where appropriate, supplemented by targeted in-person training and specialist instruction for those responsible for managing the Secretariat's information systems. Third, with the governance framework and staff capability in place, the Secretariat's business continuity arrangements should be enhanced through an off-site backup solution for confidential fisheries data. The proposed cloud backup appears to be a reasonable and cost-effective option but it should be implemented as part of a documented backup and disaster recovery procedure. Finally, as the remaining recommendations are implemented, the Secretariat should provide periodic updates to the MoP on implementation progress, including any lessons learned and whether further improvements are required.
203. **The MoP NOTED the updates regarding recommendations D1, D2, D5, D14 and D16.**
204. **The MoP NOTED the updates on S1 and S2 and their relevance to the draft SIOFA ISSP (MoP 10-14).**
205. **The MoP NOTED the update on S8 and ENDORSED the hiring of a consultant to conduct one-day general cybersecurity training for the SIOFA staff.**
206. **The MoP NOTED the update on S15 and ENDORSED the use of funds on cloud backup solutions from a web hosting provider.**
207. **The MoP NOTED the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the data and security audits (MoP-13-13-Rev1).**
208. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to continue to provide periodic updates to the MoP on implementation progress, including any lessons learned and whether further improvements are required.**
209. **The MoP REQUESTED that the Secretariat distinguish between the implementation statuses of "in progress" and "completed with adaptations" by using different colour codes for them in future updates.**
210. The Data Officer presented MoP-13-14, the draft ISSP. He explained that after the data and security audit performed in 2022, the MoP endorsed the recommendation to develop the SIOFA ISSP, the Secretariat drafted the ToR for a consultancy in 2025, and Orange Cyber Defense was selected as the consultant in 2026.
211. **The MoP reviewed and ENDORSED the SIOFA ISSP (Annex K).**

8.2 Review of the criteria and process by which papers are classified and implications for the RoP

- 212. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-13-12, the draft SIOFA Meeting Document Framework. The framework provided classifications for meeting documents, set out access rights by document classification and user group, and identified rule-by-rule implications for the Rules of Procedure (RoP).
- 213. The MoP reviewed the draft framework (MoP-13-12).
- 214. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to add the mention of circulars within the categorisation of the different types of documents.**
- 215. **The MoP ENDORSED the SIOFA Meeting Document Framework (Annex L).**
- 216. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to make the SIOFA Meeting Document Framework available on the SIOFA website in an easily accessible location.**
- 217. **The MoP NOTED the potential implications of the gap between established SIOFA practice and the Rules 8(d), 10.5, and 20 of the current RoP described in MoP-13-12-Rev1.**

Agenda item 9 – Interim bottom fishing measures

9.1 States or fishing entities that became CCPs before the MoP in 2017 – revision to measures established under CMM 01(2025)

- 218. The EU explained that it had submitted a minor update to its measures established under CMM 01(2025). The EU explained that as its relevant legislation is renewed each year, the EU informs the Secretariat of the updated legislative reference each year.
- 219. **The MoP NOTED that the EU had submitted a minor update to its interim bottom fishing measures to the Secretariat.**

9.2 States or fishing entities that became CCPs after the MoP in 2017 – approval of measures pursuant to paragraph 28 of CMM 01(2025)

- 220. **The MoP NOTED that no interim bottom fishing measures were submitted under agenda item 9.2.**

Agenda item 10 – Review and amendment of Conservation Management Measures (CMMs) currently in force

- 221. Mauritius presented MoP-13-29-Rev1, which proposed an alternate method for collecting data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) on Data Standards that allows the Mauritius semi-industrial fishery to be exempted from the requirement to embark observers on board. Mauritius informed the MoP that it had presented the proposal to the CC and, based on the CC's feedback, subsequently updated the proposal with a timeline for the implementation of the proposed method of data collection and a coverage target for biological sampling.
- 222. The Cook Islands reiterated the SC advice that port sampling targets should also include the portion of catch to be covered. In addition, the Cook Islands noted that the proposed timeline was very open-ended and suggested that Mauritius be more specific. The Cook Islands suggested that there are many international programmes on the use of cameras and electronic monitoring systems (EMS) that Mauritius could refer to, that Mauritius include information about which programs it would contact and learn from, and that Mauritius should be able to set up its program in less than five years.
- 223. The EU noted that Mauritius' proposal contained several sections that state "To be advised by the SC12". The EU suggested that Mauritius replace these entries with its actual proposed approach.
- 224. Japan pointed out that it is not currently possible to evaluate the effectiveness of Mauritius'

- proposed data collection plan and suggested that any exemption of Mauritius from the requirement to embark scientific observers on vessels in its semi-industrial fishery should be on a one-year provisional basis and subject to additional review after one year elapses.
225. The MoP expressed its appreciation to Mauritius for trying to address the difficulty it has embarking observers on board vessels in its semi-industrial fishery by proposing an alternate method for collecting data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) on Data Standards.
226. **The MoP AGREED to forward the Mauritius proposal on an alternate method for collecting data required by paragraph 12 of CMM 02(2025) on Data Standards for further review by the SC and REQUESTED Mauritius to provide additional details to facilitate the SC's review, taking into account the comments received from the MoP.**
227. China presented MoP-13-20-Rev1, which proposed amendments to CMM 10(2023) (Monitoring) to streamline the reporting regime for research vessels entering and exiting the Agreement Area and enhance operational efficiency for scientific surveys, while upholding compliance with mandatory reporting obligations. China explained that it had presented the proposal to the CC and since updated it by adjusting some of the phrasing.
228. In light of the adoption of amendments to other CMMs to enable the use of the SIOFA VMS for automatic entry and exit notification and internal consultations, China considered that the issues that MoP-13-20-Rev1 seeks to address had been resolved and China agreed to withdraw its proposal.
229. The MoP accepted the withdrawal of China's proposal in MoP-13-20-Rev1.
230. Mauritius presented MoP-13-24-Rev1, which proposed amendments to CMM 11(2020) (Compliance Monitoring Scheme) to include "minor non-compliant" as a compliance status in the table under Annex 1 Compliance Categories, based on the recommendation made by MoP11 on the Final SIOFA Compliance Report (fSCR) and reviewed by CC9 and MoP12. Mauritius explained that it had also presented the proposal at CC10 and that it had updated its proposal based on discussions at the CC and feedback from CCPs.
231. **The MoP reviewed and revised the proposal and ADOPTED the proposed amendments to CMM 11(2020) (Compliance Monitoring Scheme) (Annex M).**
232. Australia presented MoP-13-22, which proposed amendments to CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks) to implement recommendations from SC11, implement an outstanding recommendation from SC10 to establish the South Indian Ridge (SIR) Management Area, establish a catch sharing arrangement for SIR, and remove an obsolete paragraph. Australia explained that it had also presented the proposal at CC10. The amendments aim to:
- set catch limits for the Williams Ridge (WR) and Del Cano Rise (DCR) Management Areas,
 - establish the proposed SIR Management Area with a catch limit and catch-sharing arrangement,
 - clarify the line spacing requirements for longlines,
 - modify paragraph 14 regarding the achievement and reporting of tag overlap statistics,
 - remove paragraph 44.
233. Following discussions in the margins, particularly regarding catch sharing arrangements for CCPs actively fishing toothfish and opportunities for new entrants in the future, Australia presented a revised proposal (MoP-13-22-Rev2).
234. **The MoP reviewed and revised the proposal further, and ADOPTED the proposed amendments to the toothfish-related provisions of CMM 15(2025) (Management of**

Demersal Stocks) (Annex N).

235. The DSCC expressed its appreciation for the work done to establish management measures for toothfish catches and allocations across all three fishing areas, particularly the extension of measures to SIR, bringing fishing in this area in line with other toothfish fisheries.
236. The EU presented MoP-13-26-Rev1, which proposed amendments to CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks) to implement recommendations from SC10 and SC11 in relation to the management of toothfish, orange roughy and alfonsino. The EU explained that it had presented the proposal at CC10 and that based on discussions at the CC, it had updated its proposal with catch-sharing arrangements for orange roughy and alfonsino, while expressing its flexibility on the exact arrangements as it is not participating in these fisheries. The EU also emphasised the urgent need for SIOFA to establish effective management measures for orange roughy and alfonsino. The EU's proposed amendments aim to:
- a. establish the SIR Management Area with the total allowable catch (TAC) recommended by SC11,
 - b. establish an allocation mechanism for the SIR Management Area,
 - c. increase the TAC in the DCR Management Area as recommended by SC11,
 - d. amend the management system in the WR Management Area to retain the catch limit while removing the "effort" management system as a first step to implement paragraph 255 of the SC11 report,
 - e. set up a catch limit for orange roughy as recommended by SC10, and an allocation ratio,
 - f. and set up a catch limit for alfonsino as recommended by SC10, and an allocation ratio.
237. The Cook Islands reiterated the point it expressed at CC10 that it could not support the inclusion of catch limits for alfonsino and orange roughy until a definite allocation framework is in place or specific allocations for these fisheries are agreed, as there would otherwise be a risk of causing a race to fish. The Cook Islands also noted that the SC advice on the TAC value in the proposal was old and outdated, and that the time period chosen included the COVID years when the Cook Islands lost a vessel and another was under maintenance for an extended period, resulting in a low total catch that has since normalised. In addition, the Cook Islands noted that Mauritius has not fished orange roughy for more than 10 years and that if it wished to resume fishing, it should be considered a new entrant. The Cook Islands also believed that the EU proposal should cross-reference paragraphs 5 and 11 of the Cook Islands' allocation proposal to clarify some elements and that the two proposals should go hand in hand.
238. China was of the view that catch limits based on historical information would be arbitrary and premature. Regarding alfonsino, China noted that the SC is scheduled to undertake a comprehensive stock assessment in 2027. Regarding orange roughy, China suggested that rather than an explicit catch limit, a measure based on stable effort would be preferable.
239. Seychelles considered the proposal to be highly restrictive. It pointed out that it is a SIDS adjacent to the Agreement Area and that so far it has not had the capacity to participate in demersal fisheries, and that the EU proposal would exclude Seychelles from the fisheries in the future as well, as there is no mechanism for new entrants.
240. Mauritius expressed concern about the obstacles to entry for new entrants in the EU proposal. Mauritius also stated that historical catch cannot be the only criterion considered for the allocation.

241. The EU reiterated that it has proposed tentative catch limits for those fisheries because it is not appropriate for the current measure, which concerns demersal stocks, to only have management measures in place for toothfish and not alfonsino and orange roughy. The EU reminded the MoP that it had presented a similar proposal at MoP12 and was told by other CCPs that they could not accept catch limits for alfonsino and orange roughy without specific allocations, so the EU encouraged CCPs in those fisheries to discuss allocations, yet they did not. The EU also reminded the MoP that it has provided substantial financial support for much scientific work and harvest strategy development work on alfonsino and orange roughy while not being a harvester. The EU reiterated that it is not interested in participating in the alfonsino and orange roughy fisheries and that it is flexible on the actual allocations for alfonsino and orange roughy, but interested CCPs must take responsibility for discussing and negotiating them. The EU urged interested CCPs to take management decisions for these two important stocks.
242. The EU worked with interested CCPs in the margins to prepare a revised proposal (MoP-13-26-Rev2). The EU explained that CCPs had made significant progress in further developing the proposal and were able to develop revised language related to the provisions on orange roughy but were unable to reach consensus on amending the provisions on alfonsino.
243. **The MoP reviewed and revised the proposal further, and ADOPTED the proposed amendments to the orange roughy-related provisions of CMM 15(2025) (Management of Demersal Stocks) (Annex O).**
244. The DSCC welcomed the establishment of catch limits for orange roughy for the first time but expressed concern that the limit is spread over multiple stocks and areas for three years and may not be sufficiently precautionary. The DSCC noted SIOFA's development of a management procedure and urged the MoP to request advice from the SC on the spread of catch limits amongst up to eight management units and what considerations are needed for multi-year catch limits as part of the management procedure.
245. Japan presented MoP-13-23-Rev1, which proposed amendments to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) to implement the recommendations by SC11. Japan explained that during discussions at the CC, the original proposal was revised at the request of Chinese Taipei to include more detailed area information about Chinese Taipei's oilfish fisheries. Japan noted that at the CC, some CCPs had expressed their preference for any proposed amendments to the table of established fisheries to first be reviewed by the SC as per past practices. Japan explained that it has nevertheless submitted the revised proposal to the MoP as the MoP has the decision-making authority to validate such amendments if it deems them to be appropriate.
246. The EU stated that, for procedural reasons, it did not support the inclusion of the subareas that Chinese Taipei had requested to add for its oilfish fisheries at the CC. The EU pointed out that the reporting of the related data in Chinese Taipei's annual report to the SC was not enough for the inclusion of these subareas in Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025). The EU pointed out that Chinese Taipei needed to make a specific request for the inclusion of these subareas so that the SC could actually discuss such a request, as has been the past practice applied to and followed by other CCPs.
247. Seychelles supported Chinese Taipei's request for the inclusion of the additional subareas to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025). Seychelles pointed out that Chinese Taipei and Seychelles' oilfish fisheries are pelagic fisheries and should not be treated like bottom fisheries, which are restricted to specific subareas. Seychelles questioned the scientific value of restricting pelagic fisheries to specific subareas.

248. The Cook Islands echoed the EU's point regarding the procedural inconsistency of including the additional subareas in Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025). The Cook Islands noted that Chinese Taipei and Seychelles had the opportunity at the SC to request that subareas 2, 3a, 4, 5, 6, and 7 be added but did not, whereas Chinese Taipei did request that subareas 1, 3b, and 8 be added. The Cook Islands also pointed out that in its understanding, the oilfish fisheries in subareas 2, 3a, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are bycatch fisheries.
249. Chinese Taipei noted the procedural concerns expressed by other CCPs but reiterated its position that it has submitted all relevant data to the SC and did engage in oilfish fishing in the whole SIOFA Area, including the subareas in question. Chinese Taipei further pointed out that the addition of these subareas would not be inconsistent as this is a different situation to past cases. Furthermore, Chinese Taipei suggested that it would be efficient to address this issue at MoP13, rather than prolonging the process by sending it back to the SC.
250. Seychelles pointed out that while the SC makes recommendations to the MoP, the SC is a subsidiary body of the MoP and that the lack of discussion on this matter at the SC does not preclude the MoP from taking a decision on it. Seychelles also reminded other CCPs of the principles of the Agreement, particularly Article 13, which states that CPs shall give full recognition to the special requirements of developing States bordering the Area, in particular the least-developed among them and SIDS. Seychelles pointed out that the restricting of its pelagic fisheries to specific subareas would affect its legitimate right to participate in this fishery.
251. The Cook Islands pointed out that the data submitted by Seychelles to the SC only indicate catch in subareas 1, 3b and 8.
252. France (OT) also indicated that the inclusion of the additional subareas would be procedurally problematic. It also pointed out that the footnote to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) states that Annex 1 may be updated by the MoP upon the advice of the SC.
253. China drew the MoP's attention to SC-11-44, a paper that it submitted to SC11 on a comparative analysis and recommendations for the management of pelagic and bottom fisheries in SIOFA. China considered there to be some problems with the current CMM and its treatment of bottom and pelagic fisheries. China suggested that the MoP task the SC to initiate the development of a framework for the separate treatment of these two types of fisheries.
254. Seychelles stated that oilfish are a pelagic, highly mobile, migratory species, and subject to fishing, oceanic, and environmental conditions. Seychelles noted that Article 2 of the Agreement explicitly states that the Agreement's objectives are not just long-term conservation, but also promoting the sustainable development of fisheries in the Agreement Area, taking into account the needs of developing States bordering the area, and including SIDS. Seychelles believed that proposing to freeze the fishery of a SIDS that is adjacent to the Agreement Area to its current footprint, especially on a pelagic resource, actively blocks its ability to sustainably develop this fishery and locks in historical imbalances. Seychelles noted that it has operated in this fishery with only two vessels. Seychelles further noted that Article 13 mandates that CPs give full recognition to the special requirements of developing States bordering the area, in relation to conservation and management of fisheries resources and the sustainable development of such resources. Paragraph 2(c) explicitly states that management measures must not result in transferring a disproportionate burden of conservation action onto developing States and paragraph 3(b) requires CPs to assist SIDS to participate in fisheries, including facilitating access. Seychelles stated that imposing the footprint restriction would transfer a disproportionate

- burden on Seychelles, instead of facilitating access as required, defying the spirit of Article 13.
255. **The MoP NOTED Chinese Taipei's request that the MoP agree that the adoption of the amendments to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) will not prohibit Chinese Taipei from continuing to operate its oilfish fishery in other subareas.**
 256. The MoP could not reach consensus on amending the area section for oilfish fisheries in Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025), and the proposed amendments were reverted to the existing wording: "Southwest Indian Ocean". The MoP was able to reach consensus on all other amendments in the proposal.
 257. **The MoP ADOPTED the proposed amendments to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) (Annex P).**
 258. Mauritius presented MoP-13-25, which proposed amendments to Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries) to include Mauritius' alfonso mid-water trawl fishery in the table of established SIOFA fisheries based on the recommendation of MoP12 and the advice of SC11. Mauritius noted that this amendment was also taken into account in Japan's proposal.
 259. Following the MoP's discussions and adoption of Japan's proposal to amend Annex 1 of CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries), Mauritius noted that the amendments in its own proposal had been reflected and adopted, and Mauritius withdrew its proposal.
 260. The MoP accepted the withdrawal of Mauritius' proposal in MoP-13-25.
 261. At the request of the MoP, the Secretariat prepared MoP-13-33, which presented the SC's proposed technical amendments to CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) and modified versions of Annex A (Vessel Catch and Effort Data) and Annex B (Observer Data). The amendments included the number of species retained and discarded for toothfish among the data that shall be collected, so that overlap statistics can be calculated.
 262. The MoP reviewed and revised the proposal by adding data fields related to lighting to the data to be collected from squid jigging fisheries, similar to light seining fisheries (MoP-13-33-Rev1).
 263. **The MoP ADOPTED the proposed amendments to CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) (Annex Q).**
 264. At the request of the MoP, the SC Chairperson prepared MoP-13-34, which presented a potential amendment to CMM 18(2025) (BFCs) based on the MoP's discussions, specifically the addition of a footnote to paragraph 2 to clarify that the reporting requirements in paragraph 6 apply to all fishing vessels.
 265. CCPs expressed different interpretations of the applicability of paragraph 6 and there was no consensus to amend CMM 18(2025) (BFCs) by including a footnote to paragraph 2. Some CCPs were of the view that the reporting requirements in the CMM only apply to bottom fishing vessels as paragraph 2 states that "this CMM applies to all bottom fishing vessels". They pointed out that requiring reporting of non-bottom-fishing activities in BFCs would place a disproportionate burden on the management of other fisheries, including on coastal developing States. They further pointed out the reporting of information from pelagic fishing in the BFCs would not yield insight into benthic recovery or impacts. Other CCPs pointed out that all paragraphs in the CMM use the wording "bottom fishing vessels", except paragraph 6, which was intentionally drafted with the wording "any vessel allowed to fish". These CCPs considered the CMM to be unambiguous and noted that the purpose of including a footnote to paragraph 2 was only to draw the reader's attention to the fact that paragraph 6 has a different scope. They also pointed out that as bottom fishing is prohibited in the BFCs, there would logically not be any bottom fishing activities in the BFCs

- to report; rather, it would be other fishing activities that should be reported. They also pointed out the reporting of information from all fishing activities in the BFCs would be scientifically valuable.
266. **The MoP TASKED the SC to provide the MoP with advice on whether the application of the reporting requirements under paragraph 6 of CMM 18(2025) (BFCs) to all vessels, not only bottom-fishing vessels, would be scientifically valuable.**
267. Seychelles noted that some CCPs were of the view that the reporting of the information required under paragraph 6 of CMM 18(2025) by all vessels fishing in BFCs, not only bottom-fishing vessels, would be useful for conducting future reviews of the BFCs. Seychelles pointed out that it is already providing fine-scale data from its pelagic fishery to the Secretariat and that the Secretariat is able to extract information relevant to the BFCs from Seychelles' data submissions. Seychelles stated that requiring its pelagic fishing vessels to report the information required under paragraph 6 of CMM 18(2025) would place a disproportionate burden on Seychelles for the management of a fishery that it is not participating in.
268. The Science Officer clarified that the Secretariat does indeed extract information relevant to the BFCs from CCPs' data submissions and that such information is included in the SIOFA Ecosystem Summary. He explained that the difference between the data from CCPs' annual data submissions to the Secretariat and the data in CCPs' annual reports to the SC is that, in 2026, for example, the data submission would include CCPs' data up to 2024, while the annual report would include data up to 2025.
269. There was no consensus to amend CMM 18(2025) (BFCs).
270. The Cook Islands and France (OT) considered that even without the addition of the proposed footnote, the scope of paragraph 6 clearly applies to any vessel allowed to fish, i.e., all fishing vessels, and that any non-reporting of fishing within the BFCs would need to be considered by the CC.
271. **The MoP NOTED that it could become necessary to amend paragraph 8 of CMM 18(2025) in light of the forthcoming entry into operation of the SIOFA VMS and AGREED to consider potential amendments to this paragraph in the future, taking into account any insights and lessons learned from the actual operation of the SIOFA VMS.**

Agenda item 11 – New Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs)

272. China presented MoP-13-19-Rev1, which proposed a new CMM for Fishery Independent Research Cruise in the SIOFA Area. China explained that the CMM is intended to establish a clear and comprehensive framework to govern fishery independent research cruise activities and builds on discussions that were initiated by the EU proposal (MoP-12-48-Rev1) submitted at MoP12, and were further elaborated during the Scientific Committee Workshop WS2025-ORS: Window of Opportunity – Research Vessels in SIOFA and SC11. China explained that it had presented the proposal at CC10 and that it had subsequently updated the proposal based on feedback from CCPs.
273. The EU presented MoP-13-27, which proposed a new CMM for Research Cruise by Research Vessel in the SIOFA Area. The EU explained that this version of the proposal builds on previous versions submitted to MoP12 and SC11 and is intended to continue discussions on the establishment of a framework for considering research cruises by research vessels in the SIOFA Area. Research cruises have been conducted already in the SIOFA Area by CCPs and non-CCPs. The EU also noted that if SIOFA adopts a CMM for research cruises, it may become necessary to amend CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) to clearly identify data derived from research cruises and its data access arrangements.
274. The EU presented MoP-13-28, which proposed a new CMM for Scientific Research by

Fishing Vessel in the SIOFA Area. The EU explained that this version of the proposal builds on previous versions submitted to MoP12 and SC11 and is intended to continue discussions on the establishment of a framework for considering scientific research by fishing vessels in the SIOFA Area.

275. The EU presented MoP-13-INFO-15, which provided a brief overview on how the EU's two proposed measures on research cruises and fishing vessel scientific research would complement CMM 17(2025) (New and Exploratory Fisheries). As background, the EU explained that research cruises in the SIOFA Agreement Area have taken place in the past but only the R/V Dr Fridtjof Nansen 2025 research cruise was clearly recorded and explicitly approved by the MoP as a research cruise plan. Meanwhile, diverse scientific research has been carried out by SIOFA authorised fishing vessels. Such research occurrences have been documented in several SC documents and helped the SC better understand those occurrences. Together with CMM 17(2025), the EU's two proposed CMMs aim to create a coherent three-track system: CMM 17 is the precautionary gateway for potential fishery development through new and exploratory fisheries; proposed CMM 19 would fill the current gap for dedicated research-vessel cruises; and proposed CMM 20 would fill the gap for scientific research work from fishing vessels.
276. The EU presented a revised version of its proposal for a new CMM for Scientific Research by Fishing Vessel in the SIOFA Area based on feedback from CCPs (MoP-13-28-Rev3).
277. China stated that it continued to be uncomfortable with some of the provisions in the CMM and the rationale for having separate CMMs for research by research vessels and research by fishing vessels.
278. The EU presented MoP-13-27-Rev2, a joint proposal for a new CMM for Research Cruise by Research Vessel that combined China's proposal (MoP-13-19-Rev1) with the EU's original proposal.
279. The MoP reviewed the proposal and revised it further (MoP-13-27-Rev3).
280. China also expressed concerns about potential ambiguities and issues of interpretation in the proposed CMM for Research Cruise by Research Vessel and the potential impact this may have on the upcoming research cruise it has planned in the SIOFA Area. China explained that it was therefore not ready to adopt the proposed CMM for Research Cruise by Research Vessel and the proposed CMM for Scientific Research by Fishing Vessel. China expressed its commitment to continue to work with the EU and other interested CCPs towards the adoption of such CMMs at MoP14. China also expressed its intention to implement the provisions of MoP-13-19-Rev3 for its upcoming research cruise on a voluntary trial basis and to share any implementation challenges at MoP14.
281. **The MoP NOTED the continued interest among CCPs for the development of frameworks for managing research by research vessels and fishing vessels and AGREED to continue to discuss this matter at MoP14.**
282. The Cook Islands presented MoP-13-21-Rev1, which proposed a new CMM for a SIOFA Allocation Framework based on the direction of the MoP and the discussions of the CC and the SC. The Cook Islands explained that it also presented this proposal at CC10 and has since updated the proposal based on the CC's discussions and CCPs' feedback. Namely, it has amended the paragraphs regarding new entrants to not include a prescriptive percentage and amended the definition of proportional historical catch to simplify the definition and exclude historical catch caught prior to the SIOFA Agreement entering into force. Overall, the proposal seeks to ensure that the MoP applies effective, sustainable and fair criteria for allocating catch and effort in SIOFA fisheries within areas beyond national jurisdiction, and to ensure that the rights of all SIOFA CCPs are respected, while providing

- for the legitimate rights and aspirations of developing coastal States, particularly SIDS, in the development of sustainable fisheries.
283. China noted that the prevailing practice among RFMOs is to design the allocation system on a species-by-species basis and believed that such an approach would be more practical. China noted that if other CCPs agreed with the proposed design of having a general framework, it believed that such a framework should be as principle-based as possible. Regarding possible principles, China suggested that the degree of compliance and the contribution to science and effective monitoring, control and surveillance may be not necessary because these may be discriminatory to small countries that do not have effective monitoring capabilities and research capabilities. China also believed that the transfer of catch limits for new entrants would be necessary, because if a new entrant had only a very small quota, it would not be practical to deploy resources to harvest that quota. Nevertheless, China suggested that, if all other CCPs generally supported the proposal, China would be ready to work with them to refine the text.
 284. The EU also supported a more pragmatic stock-by-stock approach. Regarding allocation principles, the EU noted that while it may be useful to talk about them, in practice, a measure that requests MoP to take into account a wide range of criteria is not the most efficient or simplest way to reach agreement on allocation. Furthermore, depending on the stock some criteria may be more or less important.
 285. Australia reiterated its concern about the use of historical proportional catch and emphasised the need to avoid potentially rewarding unsustainable historical fishing activities.
 286. Seychelles suggested that the Cook Islands include reference to Article 13 of the Agreement in its proposal.
 287. The Cook Islands explained that it had designed a framework based on principles rather than one based on individual stocks because the latter approach tends to result in ad hoc allocations that vary year by year and species by species. The Cook Islands explained that this approach is intended to ensure a degree of consistency across different allocations, particularly on aspects such as accounting for new entrants and protecting the rights of SIDS. The Cook Islands agreed that unsustainable historical catch should not be rewarded, and that as the converse of that, contribution to science should be considered. The Cook Islands also clarified that it is not proposing to weight the different criteria in any way.
 288. The Cook Islands presented a revised version of its proposal based on the feedback from CCPs (MoP-13-21-Rev2).
 289. Chinese Taipei questioned the exclusion of CNCPs from allocations, pointing out that Article 17 of the Agreement states that CNCPs shall enjoy benefits from participation in the fishery commensurate with their commitment to comply with, and their record of compliance with, CMMs in respect of the relevant stocks of fishery resources.
 290. Seychelles thanked the Cook Islands for including the reference to Article 13 of the Agreement and suggested that the reference be further elaborated so that it includes mention of SIDS.
 291. The Cook Islands presented a further revised version of its proposal based on the feedback from CCPs, with amendments related to CNCP rights and obligations, catch history language, and Article 13 language (MoP-13-21-Rev3).
 292. The EU and China did not support the inclusion of a mechanism that would enable allocation to CNCPs. They pointed out that any party fishing actively or interested in fishing actively for SIOFA species must first become a CP, and that allocating quotas to CNCPs would disincentivise CNCPs from becoming CPs.

293. Chinese Taipei stated its position that based on paragraph 4 of Article 17 of the Agreement, with a view to encouraging CNCPs to become CPs, the allocation framework should retain a mechanism to allow CNCPs to receive an allocation under very limited circumstances.
294. The EU emphasised that contribution to science should be included as one of the criteria in the framework and highlighted the significant contributions it has made to advancing SIOFA's scientific work. The EU acknowledged that different CCPs have had different opportunities to contribute to science, but pointed out that equally, different CCPs have had different historical opportunities to participate in a particular fishery. Therefore, the EU believed that it was entirely appropriate and not unfair to include scientific contribution as a criterion.
295. China pointed out that it too has contributed to advancing SIOFA's scientific work, including conducting research cruises in the Agreement Area. Nevertheless, China reiterated its position that it would be discriminatory, especially to SIDS, to favour CCPs that have contributed to science in allocation discussions.
296. The MoP reviewed the proposal and revised it further (MoP-13-21-Rev4).
297. The Cook Islands held further discussions with CCPs in the margins and presented a further revised proposal (MoP-13-21-Rev5).
298. The EU thanked the Cook Islands for partially addressing its concerns but expressed continued discomfort with the binding obligation to apply the allocation framework, questioning how this would be implemented in practice. The EU also expressed concern about the separate treatment of scientific contribution compared to other criteria.
299. The Cook Islands presented a further revised proposal (MoP-13-21-Rev6).
300. Mauritius expressed concern about including historical catch in the framework.
301. The Cook Islands clarified that historical catch is only one of several criteria that are to be considered in the allocation framework and that none of these criteria are weighted.
302. The Cook Islands presented a further revised proposal (MoP-13-21-Rev7).
303. The MoP made significant progress in developing the proposal but could not reach consensus. The only remaining issue outstanding was that some CCPs wished to include a provision that would attribute transfer to the transferring SIOFA Party as part of its catch history. Other CCPs did not support this inclusion. The Cook Islands thanked the other CCPs for their collaboration and noted that it would endeavour to progress the matter through the course of the next year.
304. **The MoP NOTED continued interest among CCPs for the development of a SIOFA allocation framework and AGREED to continue to discuss this matter at MoP14.**
305. France (OT) presented MoP-13-32-Rev1, which proposed a new resolution on promoting the objectives of SIOFA through cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement (the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction). France (OT) explained that the BBNJ Agreement entered into force on 17 January 2026 and that the proposed resolution is intended to facilitate the consideration of RFMOs' competences, objectives, knowledge and governance within the BBNJ decision-making process. France (OT) further explained that the IOTC, based on a proposal by the Maldives, adopted a resolution pursuing identical goals at its 2026 annual session, and that the proposed resolution presents a similar approach in its wording, in order to establish a coherent framework within the RFMOs of the Indian Ocean. France (OT) explained that it first presented this proposal at CC10 and has since updated its proposal based on the discussions at the CC and CCPs' feedback. Primarily, rather than a legally binding CMM, the proposed format has been changed to a binding Resolution.

306. Several CCPs welcomed the proposal, noting its timely nature, the importance of engagement with the BBNJ process, and the value of being proactive in preparing for such cooperation.
307. China stated that it generally did not have any major concerns with the proposal. At the same time, it noted that while the IOTC has adopted a similar proposal, SIOFA has a different context. The IOTC is established under FAO so its resolution would enable more efficient cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement. Meanwhile, SIOFA is a separate legal entity from the FAO and can collaborate with the BBNJ Agreement smoothly even without the proposed instrument. China also noted that the proposal called for the sharing of the results of any research activity and pointed out that there may be some proprietary or confidential research that should not be shared. China therefore suggested that the proposal include reference to SIOFA's regulations related to confidentiality.
308. Seychelles expressed its full support for the proposal, noting the value of having a comprehensive framework for cooperation over cooperating on an ad hoc basis.
309. The EU recognised the reasoning behind developing a proposal around a resolution from the IOTC, since the two RFMOs are part of the same sea basin. Nevertheless, the EU pointed out that the two are different bodies with different structures. It may therefore be necessary to refocus some of the proposed activities to enable the SIOFA Secretariat to perform its duties and engage with the BBNJ Agreement.
310. France (OT) pointed out that the Secretariat is already engaging with the BBNJ Agreement as part of its current activities and that the proposal would establish a more comprehensive framework for such engagement.
311. Pew strongly encouraged SIOFA to adopt a resolution for cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement, pointing out that its entry into force has implications for all RFMOs, and that engagement with its processes will be a necessity going forward.
312. The DSCC strongly supported the efforts being made by SIOFA at MoP13 to initiate work to become BBNJ ready and referred the MoP to the information paper it presented at MoP12 (MoP-12-INFO-03).
313. France (OT) presented a revised version of its proposal that was co-sponsored by Seychelles (MoP-13-32-Rev2). France (OT) explained that the revised proposal reflected feedback from CCPs, particularly with regard to data confidentiality and the effective cooperation between the scientific bodies of SIOFA and BBNJ.
314. France (OT) also provided some additional comments to address some general points raised by other CCPs. France (OT) agreed with the point raised by other CCPs about the importance of respecting the differences in structure between SIOFA and the IOTC and indicated that adapting the measure to SIOFA is the objective of all the discussions held during the MoP. Regarding concerns about Secretariat workload and potential additional costs, France (OT) pointed out that the Secretariat has already been working on matters related to the BBNJ Agreement and is comfortable with continuing this work. To prepare for the additional workload and costs, France (OT) suggested that the Secretariat present a breakdown of potential costs over a two-year timeframe at MoP14. France (OT) noted that reserve funds could be used to cover these costs. France (OT) also pointed out that it had included a provision for the review of the legal and financial implications to enable the resolution to stay up to date. In addition, France (OT) noted that the SIOFA RoP requires the Secretariat to follow up on international collaboration work and international arrangements, including keeping the MoP up to date on relevant matters that may be developed with other RFMOs or other international agreements, such as the BBNJ Agreement. Therefore, France (OT) preferred a binding resolution in order to provide a

- clear framework and tasks for the Secretariat, and considered that a non-binding measure would be insufficient.
315. The EU suggested that as the BBNJ processes are still taking shape and many aspects remain undecided, it would be appropriate for the resolution to be reviewed earlier than five years in the future. The EU also suggested that participation in the consultation and assessment of proposals for area-based management tools (ABMTs) should be tasked to the Secretariat more generally, rather than the Executive Secretary specifically, as other members of the Secretariat may be more suitable in the case of technical discussions.
 316. China noted that the BBNJ Agreement was concluded under the framework of the United Nations and that the scope of the participation in the BBNJ Agreement and its institutional processes are determined by the relevant provisions of the BBNJ Agreement itself. China therefore suggested revising the drafting in the proposal to ensure that the resolution remains fully consistent with the participation arrangements under the BBNJ Agreement. China considered that this resolution should be a collaboration framework. Furthermore, as the RoP and other BBNJ procedures are not yet clearly determined, China considered that each CCP would need to collaborate with the BBNJ process based on its own circumstances. Therefore, China suggested that it may be more appropriate to adopt the proposal in a non-binding form.
 317. Japan stated that while a resolution would be a more appropriate form than a CMM, it still has legal effects and creates some expectations regarding implementation. Japan noted that the Secretariat has limited human resources while its workload continues to increase, including not only emerging BBNJ matters but also other responsibilities, which needs to be taken into account. Japan also noted that many operational aspects of the BBNJ process remain unclear and are under development. Therefore, Japan expressed its preference to replace “shall” with “should” so as to not create the expectation of a fully mandatory instrument. Japan suggested that with such a change, it would be comfortable with removing the “as appropriate” qualifiers. Japan considered that this would allow the resolution to function effectively while providing a certain degree of flexibility to account for the evolving nature of the BBNJ discussions.
 318. Australia considered that the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement represented an important development in the international framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Australia believed that SIOFA, as the competent fisheries management organisation, has an important role to play in ensuring that fisheries management and broader ocean governance continue to develop in a coherent and complementary manner. Australia supported the proposal as a practical framework for constructive engagement while respecting SIOFA’s mandate and decision-making processes. Australia particularly supported the efforts to strengthen communication and information exchange. Australia believed that early engagement with the BBNJ process would help avoid duplication, promote consistency, and ensure that decisions that affect the high seas are informed by the best available scientific advice and by the expertise already developed in SIOFA.
 319. The DSCC welcomed the proposed resolution to develop SIOFA engagement with the BBNJ Agreement, noting that it would provide a good framework for progressing such engagement. As previously indicated in the DSCC paper MoP-12-INFO-03, the DSCC recommended establishing a standing agenda item on BBNJ at MoP and establishing a working group under the MoP to progress BBNJ issues, including developing procedures necessary to develop environmental assessment and ABMTs, including MPA procedures. The DSCC noted that many of the issues it had raised in MoP-12-INFO-03 were covered in

the France (OT) proposal.

- 320. France (OT) presented a further revised version of its co-sponsored proposal with Seychelles based on feedback from CCPs (MoP-13-32-Rev3).
- 321. **The MoP reviewed and revised the proposal and ADOPTED the new Resolution on promoting the objectives of SIOFA through cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement (Annex R).**

Agenda item 12 – Capacity building needs for developing states

12.1 Technical assistance needed for the implementations of obligations

- 322. The Executive Secretary provided an update on the implementation of Article 13 in 2025–2026. In response to a request from the Cook Islands for capacity building and support regarding the management and processing of its data, with an emphasis on Microsoft Access Database and SIOFA data checking procedures, the Data Officer conducted training with four officers of the Ministry of Marine Resources from 15 to 23 November 2025 in Avarua. As for non-CCP developing States, while SIOFA does not currently have a formal capacity building framework for them, it provides financial assistance to support their participation in SIOFA meetings. The Secretariat also reaches out to neighbouring coastal States every year to encourage their participation and accession to the Agreement and offers financial assistance to facilitate that as well. In 2026, the Secretariat has provided financial assistance to support participation by developing States in SC11 and MoP13.
- 323. The Cook Islands thanked the Secretariat and the Data Officer in particular for supporting its request for capacity building assistance. The Cook Islands welcomed this assistance as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) with a small administration and limited financial resources, and noted that such assistance supports its effective participation in SIOFA processes.

12.2 Review of the options to facilitate and address the capacity building need of CCP developing States

- 324. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-13-07-Rev1 which outlined options to facilitate and address the capacity building needs of CCP developing States. He explained that MoP11 had tasked the Secretariat to identify capacity building needs of developing States and provide options for addressing these needs. Through a first round of consultations with CCPs, the Secretariat developed a paper and submitted it to MoP12 for discussion. In order to efficiently implement the options and address the needs for capacity building, MoP12 tasked the Secretariat to correspond with the relevant CCPs again to seek their input on their preferences among the proposed options in MoP-12-25-Rev2 and to submit an updated paper, with CCPs' input, for review to SC11, CC10, and MoP13. The Executive Secretary suggested that it could be useful to engage a consultant to develop a capacity building action plan to 1) define criteria of vulnerability indices to gauge the eligibility for assistance; 2) establish a timeline of the priority actions to be done starting from January 2027; 3) determine the budget necessary for the in-person workshops; and 4) consult stakeholders to organise training and workshops virtually or in-person.
- 325. China thanked the Secretariat for presenting the paper. China noted that it also has capacity building needs related to BFIAs, which it considers a priority and for which it wishes to receive support from the Secretariat.
- 326. **The MoP NOTED the capacity building needs and selected options submitted by CCP developing States as presented in Tables 1 to 4 of MoP-13-07-Rev1.**
- 327. Pew informed the MoP that it has developed a new capacity self-assessment tool (CSAT) as described in MoP-13-INFO-13. Pew explained that the CSAT is designed to be a

standardised tool that CCPs can use internally to assess their capacity to comply with international obligations. Pew informed the MoP that it has 30,000 USD in funds available to support the utilisation of the CSAT and could offer that funding to SIOFA if the CSAT is incorporated into the Capacity Building Action Plan.

- 328. **The MoP thanked Pew for its generous offer to support the funding of a consultant to develop a Capacity Building Action Plan for SIOFA and AGREED to accept it.**
- 329. **The MoP AGREED that the ToR for the consultancy would include the capacity development needs identified by CCPs in MoP-13-07-Rev1 and the use of the Self-Assessment Tool to Evaluate a Country's Capacity to Engage in RFMO Compliance Review Processes as described in MoP-13-Info-13. The MoP further encouraged CCPs to utilise the tool to help inform the development of the Capacity Building Action Plan.**
- 330. **The MoP also NOTED the SWIOP program and that some capacity building activities may be delivered through this program and help reduce the duplication of activities where appropriate.**
- 331. **The MoP ENDORSED the recommendation to hire a consultant utilising the generous voluntary contribution from Pew to develop the Capacity Building Action Plan.**
- 332. Seychelles presented MoP-13-31, a proposal for a MoP Decision on the practical operationalisation of Article 13 of the SIOFA Agreement. Seychelles proposed that the MoP adopt a structured, practical and resource-sensitive approach to the implementation of Article 13 of the SIOFA Agreement. Its proposal identified priority support areas for eligible SIDS and developing SIOFA CPs, and set out a simple implementation process for identifying needs, coordinating available support, integrating Article 13 considerations across relevant SIOFA workstreams, and reviewing progress over time. Seychelles emphasised that its proposal does not seek to amend the Agreement or create an open-ended funding mechanism; rather, it seeks to give practical effect to an existing commitment through clearer coordination, reporting and follow-up.
- 333. **The MoP NOTED the importance of giving practical effect to Article 13 of the SIOFA Agreement.**
- 334. The MoP reviewed and revised the proposal (MoP-13-31-Rev1).
- 335. **The MoP ADOPTED the MoP Decision (Annex S).**
- 336. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to support the coordination and periodic reporting of Article 13-related needs, activities and progress.**

Agenda item 13 – Secretariat administration

13.1 Report on the Secretariat activities (since MoP12)

13.1.1 Action done relative to SIOFA Performance Review recommendations

- 337. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-13-06, which provided a summary of the status of the implementation of the recommendations proposed by the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2023 and adopted by MoP10. The summary was updated at MoP12, with input from the SC and the CC. Further updates have been proposed by SC11. CC10 also reviewed the plan but did not propose any updates. The Executive Secretary highlighted the recommendations relevant to the MoP and invited the MoP to provide further comments as appropriate.
- 338. **The MoP NOTED the implementation plan (Annex T).**
- 339. **The MoP NOTED that most of the recommendations from the first Performance Review Panel have been completed or are close to finalisation.**
- 340. **The MoP NOTED that the first Performance Review Report recommended that another Performance Review process be held within an appropriate timeframe, such as 5 years**

from the first iteration.

13.1.2. Secretariat activities

341. The Executive Secretary presented a report (MoP-13-01-Rev1) on staff resources and Secretariat activities prepared in accordance with Rules 8.1(f) and 8.1(g).
342. **The MoP NOTED the report on the Secretariat activities in MoP-13-01-Rev1.**
343. **The MoP ENDORSED the SIOFA Secretariat goals 2026 to 2027.**
344. The Executive Secretary also highlighted the fact that his current term of office will end in December 2027 and that the MoP is required to follow the detailed process outlined in Annex U of MoP9 under the MoP Chairperson's leadership.
345. The MoP welcomed the recruitment of the ICT Expert, Ms Hansa Gennoo, and expressed its satisfaction with the intersessional decision to establish one part-time position for data-related matters and one part-time position for ICT-related matters.
346. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-13-INFO-21, which provided an overview of the plans to modernise and redesign the SIOFA website. The current SIOFA website was developed more than 10 years ago, with the support of the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC). The website has served its purpose of providing SIOFA with a digital platform to support its daily operations and communication activities. However, it was developed under technical and design standards that no longer reflect current expectations for usability, accessibility, or public-facing communication. The Secretariat intends to redesign and renew the website with the goals of improving access to documents and information and providing a modern public-facing website that reflects SIOFA's current work. The Secretariat intends to carry out the website renewal primarily through internal effort. It may seek support through partnerships or through voluntary contributions from CPs, or funding from the reserve funds in 2027. The Secretariat anticipates that a renewed website could, with smooth progress, be operational by the end of 2027 and it aims to be able to present a concrete proposal at MoP14.
347. **The MoP NOTED that enhancement of the SIOFA website would be welcome but AGREED that this is not a priority or tasking previously expressed by the MoP, and that it should not be prioritised over other Secretariat responsibilities.**
348. **The MoP AGREED that this is not an urgent task and that the work did not need to be completed by the Secretariat's proposed deadline of the end of 2027.**
349. **The MoP AGREED that efforts to modernise and redesign the SIOFA website should be driven by internal resources and potentially external funding sources, such as support from FAO, and that the SIOFA budget should not be used for this work.**
350. **Accordingly, the MoP AGREED that the scope of the website enhancement could be narrowed to ensure that it did not have budgetary implications and that when reevaluating the scope, the Secretariat should focus on modernising the user experience, particularly facilitating easy and quick access to documents.**
351. CCPs highlighted the importance of being able to quickly and easily find the latest versions of meeting documents that are frequently being revised during meetings. CCPs also suggested that it would be convenient to organise meeting documents into topics, such as CMM proposals, CC-related documents, SC-related documents, financial documents, etc., rather than having a long list on the meeting page.

13.2 Financial status

352. Agenda item 13.2 and its sub-agenda items were discussed in a closed session.

13.2.1 Update on the 2020 fraud

353. China informed the MoP that it continues to make progress towards recovering the misappropriated funds for its 2019 and 2020 contributions. China will continue to make

every effort to recover the misappropriated sum, keep the Secretariat updated on its progress, and remit the sum to SIOFA as soon as possible.

13.2.2 Financial report

354. The Executive Secretary presented a report on financial resources (MoP-13-02) to the MoP with an overview of the budget position, annual financial statements and any funds held in reserve, in accordance with Regulation 9.3 of the Financial Regulations and Rule 8(1)(f) of the RoP.

355. **The MoP NOTED the Report on Financial Resources provided by the Secretariat in MoP-13-02.**

13.2.3 External Auditor report

356. The Executive Secretary presented the Auditor's report (MoP-13-02). The report confirmed that, in all material respects, SIOFA's financial position as at 31 December 2025 and its financial performance for the year then ended are in compliance with the SIOFA Financial Regulations.

357. **The MoP NOTED the annual financial statements and the Auditor's report presented in MoP-13-02.**

13.3 SIOFA Budget

358. Agenda item 13.3 and its sub-agenda items were discussed in a closed session.

13.3.1 Mid-year budget tracking paper with the actual expenditure

359. The 2026 mid-year budget report is available in MoP-13-INFO-04.

13.3.2 Provisional 2027 budget and 2028 forecast budget

360. The Executive Secretary presented the draft SIOFA 2027 budget in MoP-13-03-Rev2.

361. CCPs requested clarifications and modifications to the draft budget, and the MoP incorporated those changes in the 2027 budget (MoP-13-03-Rev3).

362. Information on the 2028–2029 forecast budget is available in MoP-13-03-Rev3.

363. The EU indicated its intention to host the CC11 and MoP14 meetings and to provide voluntary contributions to cover the meeting support costs and the Secretariat's travel costs, subject to further internal discussions.

364. The MoP considered the Executive Secretary's proposal to amend the Intern policy.

365. **The MoP ENDORSED setting the net internship allowance at a maximum of the gross minimum hourly wage rate fixed by the host State on 1 January each year.**

366. The MoP did not endorse the proposal to include an option to offer an intern a non-renewable six-month contract at the end of their six-month placement.

367. The MoP considered the Executive Secretary's request for clarification on the eligibility procedure for applicants seeking financial assistance to participate in the MoP and its subsidiary bodies in accordance with paragraph 10 of Annex 1 of the Financial Regulations.

368. **The MoP AGREED that if a CCP or non-cooperating party (NCP) eligible for financial assistance has funded the participation of one or more representatives using its own funds, it is eligible to apply for financial assistance to fund the participation of an additional representative.**

369. **The MoP AGREED to renew the contract of the auditor, Mr Arnaud Fayol, for a new three-year term.**

370. **The MoP reviewed and ENDORSED the SC Working Plan and the associated budget.**

371. The Executive Secretary explained that some CCPs report to the Secretariat the total catches of all species from the previous year, including tuna and billfish, which are species that would normally fall under the IOTC mandate. He explained that these species have been excluded from the calculation of the contribution until now, but some of these species are caught in SIOFA-target fisheries (i.e. oilfish and escolar fishery), while others are caught

in tuna target fisheries. He asked if these species should continue to be excluded from the calculation of the contribution as in the past and presented a number of options for the method of calculating CCPs' contributions.

372. **The MoP AGREED to continue to apply the usual calculation method for the CCPs' contributions.**

373. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to submit a paper to MoP14 that summarises the data that are submitted by CCPs that are members of both SIOFA and the IOTC to the IOTC, as well as the data that are shared by SIOFA with the IOTC and vice versa.**

13.3.3 Adoption of the budget

374. **The MoP ADOPTED the 2027 budget (Annex U), in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.7.**

375. **The MoP NOTED the forecast 2028–2029 budget.**

Agenda item 14 - Cooperation with other RFMOs, international bodies and other relevant instruments

14.1 Cooperation with CCAMLR, RFMOs and other international organisations

14.1.1 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

376. The Executive Secretary reported that members of the Secretariat continue to attend annual meetings of CCAMLR virtually. The Secretariats of SIOFA and CCAMLR are also collaborating on toothfish tagging. In addition, the Secretariat has already initiated contact with the new CCAMLR Executive Secretary.

14.1.2 South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO)

377. The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat was invited but unable to attend in-person meetings of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) this year due to human resources and time constraints but that it continues to maintain close cooperation with SEAFO.

14.1.3 South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC)

378. The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat was not able to attend the annual meeting of SWIOFC, which was held in person only, but did participate virtually in the National Workshop on the Implementation of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement and Related Instruments and gave a presentation. He also noted that the new Secretary of SWIOFC is Jon Lansley, who was previously SIOFA Executive Secretary, which should facilitate cooperation. He also reported that the Secretariat plans to attend the upcoming annual SWIOFC meeting, as well as the meetings of the Steering Committee of the SWIOFish5 project and the Regional Steering Committee of the EAF Nansen project that precede it, at least remotely.

379. SWIOFC noted that the founding instruments of SIOFA and SWIOFC call for close cooperation between the two organisations and expressed its intention to promote such cooperation. SWIOFC identified monitoring, control, and surveillance capacity training under SWIOP, for SWIOP-eligible countries that are members of both SWIOFC and SIOFA, as potential areas for collaboration.

14.1.4 South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO)

380. The Executive Secretary reported that the Compliance Officer visited the SPRFMO Secretariat, primarily to learn about SPRFMO's VMS operations and system. The visit also provided an opportunity for the two Secretariats to discuss higher-level institutional matters.

14.1.5 Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)

381. The Executive Secretary reported that ACAP was reactivated for six years on 5 November

2024, that a new Executive Secretary has been appointed, and that ACAP attended SC11, where it recommended that SIOFA harmonise CMM 13(2025) (Mitigation of Seabirds Bycatch) and CMM 02(2025) (Data Standards) with international best practices implemented by other RFMOs, such as SEAFO and SPRFMO.

14.1.6 Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

382. The Executive Secretary recalled the attempts made to date to formalise a framework for cooperation between the two organisations and explained that at present, cooperation between the IOTC and SIOFA is taking place outside such a framework.

14.1.7 Sustainable Western Indian Ocean (SWIO) Programme (SWIOP)

383. The Executive Secretary reported that discussions with the implementing agency of component 1.2 of the Project, Expertise France (EF), are ongoing to finalise an MoU.

384. **The MoP NOTED that there is overlap between the longline fisheries of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) and major SIOFA oilfish fishing grounds. The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to seek to promote collaboration with the CCSBT, including exchanging information on CCSBT longline fisheries.**

14.2 Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement)

385. The Compliance Officer presented MoP-13-15, which provided an update on developments relating to the BBNJ Agreement since the conclusion of MoP12, and the Secretariat's suggestions for future engagement with the BBNJ framework. Since MoP12, the Compliance Officer has attended the Regional Workshop on the BBNJ Agreement and the third session of the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom III). In this period, the BBNJ Agreement entered into force and the PrepCom process concluded. The next formal BBNJ meeting will be the first Conference of the Parties (COP1), tentatively scheduled for January 2027. While significant progress has been made towards the operationalisation of the BBNJ Agreement, substantial work remains to be undertaken, including determination of the precise modalities for collaboration, consultation, and participation with RFMOs and other international fisheries bodies (IFBs). It will therefore be important for the Secretariat to continue to engage proactively in dialogue with the COP and its subsidiary bodies to promote greater awareness and understanding of the value of RFMO-related processes and help ensure that the BBNJ framework remains coherent with, and complementary to, existing regional fisheries governance frameworks. SIOFA and other IFBs, including RFMOs, should give further attention to establishing structured, predictable, and systematic modalities for engagement with the BBNJ framework. Further attention should also be given to ensuring that data and information exchange arrangements are fully consistent with applicable confidentiality obligations and data governance requirements within RFMOs. In addition, while RFMO Secretariats may continue to provide recommendations and technical input on matters relevant to their mandates and expertise, it will be important for Parties to the BBNJ Agreement to participate proactively in forthcoming COP processes to ensure that RFMO-related considerations are appropriately reflected in the final outcomes and arrangements adopted under the BBNJ framework, including through stronger engagement of fisheries managers and administrations at the national level.

386. The MoP expressed its appreciation for the hard work by the Secretariat to engage with the BBNJ process and stay abreast of relevant developments.

387. China expressed its view that the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement must adhere to the "not-undermine" principle and that ABMTs, environmental impact assessments (EIAs), and MPAs should fully respect and complement existing measures adopted by RFMOs.

China supported granting stable and permanent formal observer status to RFMOs at the BBNJ COP. China supported the establishment of a standing institutional interaction between BBNJ scientific and technical bodies and the SCs of RFMOs to enable effective utilisation of existing regional scientific outcomes and to avoid research duplication and institutional overlap.

388. The EU highlighted the importance of CCPs that are Parties to the BBNJ Agreement ensuring that there is fisheries expertise in delegations. The EU considered this essential for maintaining close contact between RFMOs and the BBNJ process. The EU also considered that engagement between RFMOs and BBNJ bodies should be interactive and bidirectional.
389. The EU also noted some of the concerns cited by the Secretariat in MoP-13-15, namely that observer status of IFBs would not be automatic, that there was no agreement that observer states should be permanent or at least stable, and that there was no agreement to formally recognise and prioritise engagements with IFBs with mandates that will intersect and overlap with the BBNJ Agreement. Regarding the first two concerns, the EU informed the MoP that the BBNJ's draft Rules of Procedure provide that representatives of organisations that have been observers in the Intergovernmental Conference, or other instruments that are recognised, are entitled to participate as observers, which includes RFMOs. Regarding the third concern, the EU informed the MoP that the draft decision in Annex VII of the PrepCom III report mentions the need for a gradual approach towards and strategic prioritisation of early cooperation arrangements with relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies whose mandates directly intersect with the objectives of the Agreement, which includes RFMOs.
390. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to continue its engagement with the BBNJ process to progressively map out any potential linkages and engagement requirements of the SIOFA with BBNJ workstreams, as well as subsidiary body input or consultation.**
391. To balance budgetary pressures, the MoP encouraged the Secretariat to consider practical online engagement and encouraged CCPs to provide appropriate updates to SIOFA meetings.
392. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to leverage the FAO Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) to establish effective linkages with other RFMOs and potential alignment with them on common decisions, thereby supporting effective and efficient BBNJ engagement.**
393. **The MoP TASKED the Secretariat to identify specific discussion points when preparing the annotated agendas for future meetings of the CC, SC, and the MoP, to facilitate focused discussion on critical decision points or consultative requirements.**
394. The EU presented an information paper on interaction between RFMOs and the BBNJ Agreement (MoP-13-INFO-08). The EU pointed out that the BBNJ Agreement recognises the role of RFMOs and should be interpreted and applied in a way that does not undermine RFMOs, but rather promotes coherence and coordination with these frameworks. The EU noted that while the BBNJ process is still taking shape, SIOFA and other RFMOs should not delay their preparations for engaging with BBNJ and should seek to participate in shaping those processes. The EU highlighted some key topics that SIOFA should consider so as to proactively prepare itself for potential future interactions with the BBNJ Agreement: Are the relevant timelines and procedures applicable in SIOFA sufficiently well known by the negotiators who are finalising the procedures for the functioning of the BBNJ Agreement? Does SIOFA have a clear and comprehensive overview of its activities and achievements available? Should SIOFA work with other RFMOs to ensure coherence in any potential contributions or information flowing between RFMOs? Is SIOFA sufficiently prepared and

equipped to deal with future requests for consultation or cooperation from BBNJ? Is there sufficient scientific capacity for such work and for dealing with future BBNJ requests? The EU informed the MoP that it intends to host an event in Brussels on 17 March 2027 to advance such discussions among RFMOs and their members, focusing on how RFMOs can prepare for the opportunities and challenges presented by the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement.

395. The MoP thanked the EU for its information paper.
396. The Executive Secretary stated that, in his experience, most RFMOs have worked actively on a common RFMO presentation and representation during the major BBNJ-related events. He noted that many of the points highlighted by the EU had also come up in a recent FAO meeting he attended. The Executive Secretary informed the MoP that the Secretariat intends to attend BBNJ COP1 in January 2027. Regarding the event that the EU will host in March, the Executive Secretary pointed out that the timing will overlap with the planned dates for the SIOFA SC.
397. China stated that it has consistently engaged in the negotiation and implementation of the BBNJ Agreement in a responsible and constructive manner. China noted that it has acted in the common interest of the international community and remains committed to promoting a just and equitable international maritime order. China stated that it attaches importance to the principle of the common heritage of humankind as enshrined in UNCLOS and supported the incorporation of this principle into the BBNJ Agreement. China noted that it also attaches great importance to capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology to developing countries and supports continued international efforts to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to effectively participate in activities related to the conservation and the sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. China underscored that RFMOs, including SIOFA, continue to play an indispensable role in the conservation and management of high seas fisheries, and that the BBNJ Agreement and the relevant international mechanisms, including RFMOs, are equal in legal status, with neither subordinate to the other. China believed that SIOFA, when considering issues concerning its relationship with the BBNJ Agreement, is fully observing the “not-undermine” principle in Article 5 of the BBNJ Agreement, and that SIOFA, as appropriate, may engage with the COP or the PrepCom of the BBNJ Agreement to determine appropriate arrangements for cooperation and coordination while fully preserving its authority and autonomy.
398. Australia agreed with the EU that the BBNJ process is still under construction and that there is an opportunity for Parties to the BBNJ Agreement to help shape its modalities. Australia agreed with the importance of Parties to the BBNJ Agreement having fisheries expertise on their delegations and engaging in internal coordination to ensure that RFMO measures are considered in the development of BBNJ proposals. Australia believed that interactions between the BBNJ Agreement and different international frameworks, including RFMOs, need to be treated as complementary and not a competition or hierarchical. Australia emphasised that both RFMOs and the BBNJ Agreement will provide value to one another.
399. Chinese Taipei recognised the importance of the BBNJ Agreement for promoting the sustainable management and use of marine living resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction and hoped that all CCPs would continue to engage in discussions on BBNJ-related matters in an open and inclusive manner.
400. Mauritius stated that it has ratified the BBNJ Agreement, reaffirming its strong commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Mauritius stated that, as a SIDS with a vast ocean area and

significant dependence on marine resources, it attaches great importance to ensuring that the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement is inclusive, equitable and supportive of all developing States. Mauritius underlined the important role of RFMOs, including SIOFA, in the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, with established scientific expertise, management frameworks, and practical experience.

401. The IOTC shared its experience in collaborating with the BBNJ process. The IOTC explained that it has recently adopted a binding Resolution on promoting the objectives of IOTC through cooperation with the BBNJ Agreement, which has provided the Secretariat with a mandate to participate in the BBNJ process and has enabled the Secretariat to provide feedback as to what the developments are and what the implications might be. The IOTC also noted that IFBs are recognised by the BBNJ Agreement to be very important for implementing many of the processes that the BBNJ will put in place and that RFMO participation can provide some complementary perspectives in the BBNJ process, whose participants are primarily from environmental or conservation backgrounds. The IOTC suggested that, with the SIOFA and the IOTC being two of the major RFMOs in the region, having some kind of compatible commitment to the process, such as the resolution proposed by France (OT), would help to streamline collaboration between the two organisations. The IOTC also emphasised that the main drivers of the BBNJ process will not be RFMO Secretariats, but the RFMO members that are also Parties to the BBNJ Agreement.
402. The MoP encouraged CCPs that are Parties to the BBNJ Agreement to promote close coordination between their delegations to the BBNJ process and their fisheries authorities.

14.3 Cooperation with FAO

403. The Executive Secretary presented MoP-13-INFO-10, which provided information about SIOFA's participation in the FAO Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP). He explained that SC11 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 CWP, an FAO working group that coordinates fishery statistics programs among regional fishery bodies and other intergovernmental organisations. 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 financial or human resources. The Executive Secretary has 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.

14.3.1 FAO ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project

404. The Executive Secretary reported that the Science Officer cooperated and participated in various FAO-DSF II meetings and activities, including the Steering Committee meeting, the Nansen cruise, and the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) Symposium. The Executive Secretary also reported that he attended an FAO workshop on developing guidance for improved implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), the precautionary approach and climate change considerations by deep-sea RFMOs and an FAO workshop on strengthening the strategic vision for fisheries communications, engagement and outreach, in relation to the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in the ABNJ.
405. The FAO-DSF presented MoP-13-INFO-19, which provided an overview of the DSF Project's recent and upcoming activities relevant to SIOFA. Key achievements include a workshop on catch reporting of deepwater sharks, a workshop on cross-sectoral interactions with deep-

sea fisheries, an online workshop on integrating climate change considerations by RFMOs, a workshop on developing guidance on the implementation of EAFM, a workshop on RFMO communications and outreach, the launch of a digital deepwater shark identification guide, the development of data-limited stock assessment methodologies, mapping of deep-sea fisheries in the ABNJ, and a joint cruise with R/V Nansen in the SIOFA Area. The DSF Project ends in May 2027 and the proposal for another phase is under development.

406. The Executive Secretary introduced MoP-13-INFO-20, which provided an overview of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Implementation Monitoring Tool (EAF-IMT) developed by FAO under the EAF-Nansen Program. The EAF-IMT provides a practical framework for assessing and monitoring progress towards EAF implementation.

14.3.2 FAO Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN)

407. The Executive Secretary reported that SIOFA continues to engage with the RSN and that this collaboration is fruitful. He also pointed out that coordination among RFMO Secretariats helps to more effectively champion the role of RFMOs in the management of fishery resources.

14.3.3 FAO FIRMS

408. The Executive Secretary reported that the Science Officer completed the annual submission of aggregated data to the FAO Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) and the update of the SIOFA FIRMS factsheets.

Agenda item 15 – Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCs)

15.1 Renewal of CNCP status

409. The MoP acknowledged that Comoros had written to the Secretariat on 4 May 2026 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-13-08).
410. Comoros expressed its commitment to complying with the SIOFA CMMs and the Agreement and informed the MoP that it is currently reviewing its national regulation to enhance its compliance with them.
411. **The MoP AGREED that Comoros qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2026.**
412. The MoP acknowledged that India had written to the Secretariat on 24 April 2026 to apply to retain its CNCP status (MoP-13-08).
413. India expressed its commitment to continuing to cooperate and collaborate with SIOFA to ensure the sustainable management and use of fisheries resources. India informed the MoP that it does not conduct fishing operations in the SIOFA Area, but it is interested in potentially conducting such fishing operations in the future.
414. **The MoP AGREED that India qualifies to retain its CNCP status in 2026.**

Agenda item 16 – Future Chairing arrangements

16.1 Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the SC

415. **The MoP NOTED that Mr Alistair Dunn had completed the first year of his two-year term as the SC Chairperson.**
416. **The MoP NOTED that the SC agreed to re-elect Dr Zhou Fang (China) as a SC Vice Chairperson.**
417. **The MoP NOTED that Ms Charlotte Chazeau (France Overseas Territory) had completed the first year of her two-year term as a SC Vice Chairperson.**

16.2 Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Compliance Committee

418. **The MoP NOTED that the CC agreed to re-elect Mrs Meera Koonjul (Mauritius) to serve as the CC Chairperson for another two-year term.**
419. **The MoP NOTED that the CC agreed to re-elect Mr Patrick Sachs (Australia) to serve as**

the CC Vice Chairperson for another two-year term.

16.3 Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties

420. **The Meeting of the Parties AGREED that Ms Fiona Harford (EU) would serve as its Chairperson and that Mr Lualua Tua-Trood (Cook Islands) would serve as its Vice-Chairperson from the conclusion of the 13th Meeting of the Parties to the conclusion of the 14th Meeting of the Parties.**

Agenda item 17 – Any other business

421. France (OT) introduced MoP-13-INFO-22, which provided an overview of the mission carried out by the *OSIRIS II* patrol vessel in the French Southern Territories and the Agreement Area from 11 February to 9 March 2026.
422. France (OT) encouraged other CCPs to conduct patrols in the Agreement Area.
423. Pew introduced MoP-13-INFO-11, which outlined ways in which RFMOs can assist with the implementation of the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

17.1 2025 Nansen Survey in the SIOFA Area

424. The Science Officer presented MoP-13-INFO-05, which provided a summary report of the Nansen survey conducted from 20 November to 10 December 2025 in the SIOFA Area. The cruise generated substantial new knowledge on poorly understood seamount ecosystems in the SIOFA Area, combining oceanographic, habitat, and biological data across multiple scales to reveal emerging patterns in these complex environments. It significantly advanced understanding of deep-sea biodiversity, including the first-ever video records of certain shark species. By integrating complementary methods, such as eDNA, physical sampling, and baited remote underwater video (BRUV) surveys, the expedition filled critical data gaps on species presence, distribution, and life history, while also testing innovative tools like digital identification keys. In addition, observations of seabirds and marine mammals provided valuable indicators of ecosystem health and predator-prey dynamics, strengthening the scientific basis for ecosystem-based management and long-term conservation planning in the region. As noted by the SC in paragraph 423 of the SC11 report, the survey was conducted according to the requirements set out by the MoP and the SC and all necessary data from the cruise have been submitted to SIOFA.
425. The MoP offered its congratulations on the development of the Bendicam that enabled such high quality images at such a depth.
426. **The MoP NOTED the highly valuable scientific work produced by the Nansen survey and thanked the EAF-Nansen Programme and the FAO Common Oceans Programme for facilitating this work.**
427. **The MoP NOTED that the Nansen survey in the SIOFA Area met the conditions that the MoP had established for it in 2024.**
428. **The MoP NOTED the value of the data generated from the Nansen survey, particularly for future reviews of the SIOFA BFCs, and TASKED the SC to develop a timetable for analysing these data.**
429. **The MoP NOTED the value of continued collaboration with the EAF-Nansen Programme and AGREED to continue to explore opportunities for additional surveys in the future.**

Agenda item 18 – 2026 meeting arrangements

430. **The EU requested to host the 11th meeting of the CC and the 14th Meeting of the Parties.**
431. **The MoP NOTED that in accordance with Rule 1, paragraph 2 of the SIOFA Rules of Procedure, the 2027 MoP meeting would normally be held in Mauritius. The MoP AGREED that the 2027 meetings of the CC and MoP could exceptionally be held in the**

EU.

- 432. **Mauritius confirmed its intention to host the 12th meeting of the SC.**
- 433. **The MoP AGREED that the 12th meeting of the SC will take place from 15 to 24 March 2027 in Mauritius.**
- 434. **The MoP AGREED that the 11th meeting of the CC will take place from 1 to 2 July 2027 and the 14th Meeting of the Parties will take place from 5 to 9 July 2027 in Brussels, Belgium.**
- 435. **The MoP NOTED that CC11 would be the first time that the duration of the CC would be shortened from three days to two days and AGREED that the meeting could be extended to 3 July 2027 if necessary.**
- 436. The MoP thanked Mauritius for its proposal to host the SC12 meeting.
- 437. The MoP thanked the EU for its proposal to host the CC11 and MoP14 meetings.

Agenda item 19 – Report adoption

- 438. **The MoP ADOPTED the report of its 13th ordinary meeting at 6:00 p.m., 10 July 2026.**

Agenda item 20 – Meeting closure

- 439. The MoP thanked the Chairperson for her excellent leadership.
- 440. The MoP also thanked the rapporteur for his excellent work, the Secretariat for organising the meeting, the interpreters for their wonderful work, the technical staff for their support, and Seychelles for their hospitality and hosting the meeting in their beautiful country.
- 441. The Chairperson thanked the participants, the Secretariat, and all the support staff for their cooperation and assistance.
- 442. The DSCC expressed its appreciation to the MoP and to the Chairperson for facilitating the DSCC's active participation despite not being present in person.
- 443. The meeting was closed at 6:05 p.m., 10 July 2026.