

The Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties  
01-05 July 2019

Pearle Beach Resort & Spa conference centre, Flic en Flac, Mauritius

MoP6-Prop15

## CMM for Management of Demersal Stocks in the Agreement Area

*Relates to agenda item: CC3 4.2, MoP6 12 –new CMMs*

Proposal  Working Document  Information Paper  Other Document

## Delegation of Australia

### Abstract

#### **This CMM in a snapshot**

This CMM is intended to cover the regulation of demersal stocks in the Agreement Area. This is an area that requires substantive discussion from the MoP in order to progress arrangements.

As a whole, except for the toothfish fisheries, SIOFA is a data poor, low effort fishery which makes reliable assessments difficult. The Scientific Committee is making progress against its workplan; however, it is clear that this is a resource-intensive exercise and it may be some years before the principal demersal species can be assessed.

The MoP is required to apply the precautionary approach. In this respect, the MoP may need to consider implementing precautionary management, including precautionary catch limits, until such time as the SC can provide advice.

The SC has assessed **orange roughy** in the Agreement Area and advised that the 7 stocks are assessed as being above 50% SSB. There is no immediate cause for concern with orange roughy. However, consistent with the SC's advice, we propose that a catch or effort trigger be applied.

The SC has expressed concern over the level of catches of **toothfish** on Williams Ridge and Del Cano Rise; and of deepwater sharks. Williams' Ridge and Del Cano Rise are the subject of a separate proposal by Australia. Noting that urgent measures are recommended, it is prudent for the MoP to act on this advice **as soon as possible**.

A number of CCPs have expressed concern around the status of the **alfonsino** fishery, citing anecdotal reports from skippers that fish are becoming more difficult to catch, potentially evidenced by declines in nominal CPUE, and that certain fleets are catching smaller size classes of fish. The SC is

making progress towards an alfonso stock assessment, with this due to be completed by SC5 in 2020.

At this stage, for the fisheries where the current level of catch is not a concern, it may be sufficient to implement monitoring triggers to ensure that any substantial changes in catch and/or effort trigger additional attention (e.g. expedited stock assessment or catch/effort freezes or reductions).

Australia would welcome views from other CCPs on the most appropriate management measures, particularly those CCPs with a direct interest in specific fisheries. However, in saying this, Australia wishes to emphasise:

- Toothfish should be managed compatibly with CCAMLR, including in relation to bycatch mitigation
- Australia would like to see catches of deepwater sharks dramatically decreased until such time quantitative stock assessment can be undertaken to inform sustainable catch limits to be applied within well-defined harvest strategies.

Precautionary limit and target reference points for orange roughy may have regulatory (i.e. low cost) and biological benefits.

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## Recommendations *(proposals only)*

### **1. That the Meeting of the Parties adopt the proposed CMM**

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**CMM XX-2019**  
**Management of Demersal Stocks in the Agreement Area**

**The Meeting of the Parties to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement;**

*RECOGNISING* that Article 4(a) of the *Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement* (the Agreement) calls on the Contracting Parties, in giving effect to the duty to cooperate, to adopt measures on the basis of the best scientific evidence available to ensure the long-term conservation of fishery resources, taking into account the sustainable use of such resources and implementing an ecosystem approach to their management; [source: PP01 CMM 2018/01];

*FURTHER RECOGNISING* Articles 4(c), (e) and (f) of the Agreement which call on the Contracting Parties to apply the precautionary approach and the principles that fishing practices and management measures shall take due account of the need to minimise the harmful impact that fishing activities may have on the marine environment and that biodiversity in the marine environment shall be protected; [source: PP02 CMM 2018/01];

*FURTHER RECOGNISING* Articles 6(1)(d) and (e) of the Agreement which provide that the Meeting of the Parties shall adopt conservation and management measures (CMMs) necessary for ensuring the long-term sustainability of fishery resources, taking into account the need to protect marine biodiversity, based on the best scientific evidence available and adopt generally recommended international minimum standards for the responsible conduct of fishing operations; [source: PP03 CMM 2018/01];

*MINDFUL* of Article 16 of the Agreement that calls on Contracting Parties, acting jointly under the Agreement, to cooperate closely with other international fisheries and related organisations in matters of mutual interest; [source: PP04 CMM 2018/01];

*COMMITTED* to ensuring that bottom fishing undertaken in the Agreement Area is consistent with the long-term sustainability of deep sea fish stocks and the protection of the marine environment; [source: PP09 CMM 2018/01];

**ADOPTS the following CMM in accordance with Article 6 of the Agreement:**

**Objective**

1. The objective of this CMM is to promote the sustainable management of deep-sea fisheries resources in the Agreement Area, including target fish stocks and non-target species. [source: OP1 CMM 2018/01, adapted]

**General provisions and definitions**

2. This CMM applies to all fishing vessels flying the flag of a Contracting Party, cooperating non-Contracting Party, participating fishing entity or cooperating non-participating fishing entity (collectively CCPs) to the Agreement engaging or intending to engage in bottom fishing in the Agreement Area. [source: OP2 CMM 2018/01, modified]

3. The terms defined in [CMM General Measure] have the same meaning in this CMM. [New]

4. All activities conducted under this CMM must be conducted in accordance with [CMM

General Measure] and [CMM VME Protection]. [New]

5. This CMM shall be interpreted consistently with [CMM General Measure] and [CMM VME Protection]. [New]

### **Status of Stocks**

6. The Scientific Committee shall provide regular advice on the status of demersal fisheries resources targeted in the Agreement Area, and to the extent possible species taken as bycatch in these fisheries, including straddling resources. [source: paragraph 6(a) of CMM 2018/01, modified].

### **Orange Roughy**

7. Noting that the orange roughy stocks in each of the seven sub-regional management units of the Agreement Area have been assessed as likely to be above 50 per cent of spawning stock biomass in 2017, the orange roughy stocks shall be assessed every three to five years. [New]

8. The Secretariat shall monitor annual catches of orange roughy in the Agreement Area. If the global catch or catch in any of the seven sub-regional management units increases by more than 20 per cent in any calendar year or by more than 15% a calendar year for three or more consecutive years, the Meeting of the Parties shall be advised, and this shall trigger a review by the Scientific Committee on the timing of a new assessment, and any additional management measures required. [New]

### **Toothfish**

9. *[Del Cano Rise – for discussion SC advice on the requirement for urgent measures]*

10. *[William's Ridge – for discussion noting SC advice on the requirement for urgent measures].*

### **Deepwater Sharks**

11. *[for discussion, noting SC advice on the requirement for urgent measures]*

### **Saya De Malha Bank**

12. *[For discussion noting assessments have been undertaken by Mauritius and MRAG. It would be helpful to understand what the main species are.]*

### **Other stocks**

13. Until the SC can provide advice on the status of stocks, CCPs shall endeavour to maintain catches in the alfonsino and mixed line species fisheries at recent historical levels. [New]

14. The Secretariat shall monitor catches in the alfonsino fishery and mixed line fishery. If the global catch of alfonsino changes by more than 10 per cent in any calendar year or if the global catch in the mixed line fishery changes by more than 20 per cent in any calendar year, the Meeting of the Parties shall be advised, and this shall trigger a review by the Scientific Committee on the timing of a new assessment, and any additional management measures required. [New]

**Data Reporting** [possibility of inserting this in CMM 2018/02 instead]

15. CCPs shall report, in an electronic format, the catch of their flagged vessels to the Secretariat within ten days of the end of each month in accordance with the formats specified in CMM 2018/02. [New]

16. The Executive Secretary shall circulate monthly catch reports from data provided in accordance with paragraph 15 aggregated in such a way that complies with CMM 2016/03, to all CCPs as soon as possible, once collated. [New]

**Review**

17. This CMM shall be reviewed at each ordinary Meeting of the Parties. [New]