

**MINUTES 12<sup>th</sup> MEETING**  
**IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**  
**OF THE**  
**MAHÉ PLATEAU TRAP AND LINE FISHERY CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Seychelles International Conference Centre (ICCS) Conference Room 1, Victoria, Mahé

Friday 3 December 2021

10:00 A.M.

**Introduction**

The 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Implementation Committee for the Co-Management Plan (ICCP) of the Mahé Plateau demersal trap and line fishery was held at the Seychelles International Conference Centre (ICCS), Victoria, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2021.

**Opening to the meeting**

Mr. Roy Clarisse, Principal Secretary (PS), Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy (MFBE) opened the meeting, welcomed the participants and asked for introductions from attendees. He noted that the meeting was the first being held after the launch of the Co-management Plan on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and was glad many of the members had made time for that occasion.

**Adoption of the Agenda**

The meeting proceeded with the chairperson, Mr Roy Clarisse, PS, Department of Fisheries, MFBE. The agenda in Appendix 1 was approved. The list of documents circulated in advance of the meeting is in Appendix 2. This 12<sup>th</sup> ICCP meeting incorporated mixed physical and remote conferencing facilities. All physical participants were required to adhere to the prevalent Covid-19 sanitary measures and distancing guideline as approved by the PHA. Special arrangements had been made for take-away lunches only and no coffee breaks, as a result.

The meeting had an attendance of ICCP 9 members and one observer (other fisher association). Participants were at liberty to use whichever of the three national languages they preferred. The list of participants is presented in Appendix 3.

**Developments since the last meeting**

Ms Elisa Socrates, Assistant-Manager, Resource Management (SFA) informed the meeting of the developments since the last meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> September based on working paper ICCP12-WD-2.

The Minister of Fisheries and Blue Economy, Mr Jean-Francois Ferrari, launched the Mahé Plateau trap and line fishery Co-management Plan on Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, as had been planned. Minister Ferrari traced the history of development of the Plan and emphasised its importance in ensuring sustainable fisheries and stock conservation. He noted the contribution made by many, stressed co-management and emphasised this would continue throughout the Plans implementation. He informed that the draft Fisheries (Mahé Plateau trap and line fishery)

Regulations 2020 which he had signed and had been gazetted as Statutory Instrument 77 on the 13 September 2021 would come into operation in January 2022. Altogether, it was a well organised and successful launch.

The Fisheries Liaison Officer, Mr Frank Volcere, had started his work at SFA following his SWIOFish3 recruitment. Ms Socrates introduced him, and Mr Volcere informed the meeting of his background as a previous fisher, and his work with fishers and within the fisheries sector such as with the Green Island Foundation project. The Chair and the meeting welcomed Mr Volcere.

Since a week before the October launch of the Co-management Plan, the Communication Strategy had been active in circulating communication products in support of the launch and its follow up publicity and sensitisation. Among many other products, school presentations, tv and radio ads, and a special song and video clip for the campaign by Joe Sammy, a well-known local singer and ocean activist, had been produced. The communication strategy was covered separately later in the meeting under agenda item 4. The MCS preparations would be presented under agenda item 5.

The Secretariat had contacted the Seychelles Fishers and Boat Owners Association (SFBOA) seeking to have their nominated representative and alternate following changes in the elected officials of the Association. This is important as the SFBOA representative is the Vice-Chairperson of the ICCP. Also, since the last meeting, the Secretariat had seen the departure of Mr Vincent Lucas, Chief Fisheries Officer, and the lead SFA officer on the ICCP Secretariat. The meeting wished Mr Lucas success in his future professional involvements.

In the discussions that followed, *the Chairperson proposed* that if the Secretariat does not hear from the SFBOA in relation to its representation, the matter is put to the ICCP as to the way forward at the next meeting. The Liaison Officer proceeded to inform the ICCP of the schedule of meetings that he would be holding with the fisher associations, including those on Praslin and La Digue. Meeting participants suggested that those fisher association meetings could also be the opportunity for the Co-management Plan launch T-shirts and other public relations give-aways to be distributed. Various suggestions on how and to whom these would be distributed were provided. The approach could be different for different associations depending on their attendance and participation. Finally, *it was left to the SFA to work out its stock for distribution, and for the SFA and the Liaison Officer to work out how and to whom it should be distributed.*

### **Update on the Communication Strategy**

Ms Marie Rignace, Marketing Consultant of Com & Click, provided an update of the status and progress of the Communication Strategy (see working document ICCP12/WD/3 and the presentation attached as Appendix 4). As of the end of October radio interviews had been organised and these awaited SFA confirmation. A slot for 22 December with Bonjour Sesel had been organised. A workshop with Eco-School leaders had taken place on 29 October that involved the participation of 22 teachers on site and 10 via Zoom. The Eco-School leaders had been very interested and involved at the workshop, and they would be taking the information to their various schools. The presentation included the video clip and song by Joe Sammy that had been prepared as part of the Strategy ([Nou Gardyen Nou Locean - Joe Samy - YouTube](#) ). The ICCP meeting also listened to the radio advertisements that had been produced.

Responding to the presentation, the Secretariat informed that it would examine the slots available for radio and television interviews and discuss this within SFA as to who would be participating. *The ICCP unanimously considered that the Joe Sammy song and video was a good product and that the current video had improved considerably compared to the previous version.* Comments and suggestions on the advertisements included that:

- some were spoken too fast;

- English versions should use English fish names, and creole versions creole fish names;
- they should also inform that recreational and sportfishers are not allowed to sell fish and that no person should purchase fish unless it was caught by a licenced commercial fisher in compliance with the regulations;
- consumer responsibility should be stressed;
- though it is correct and important to include information on penalties, these that should not be emphasised at this stage of the communication and sensitisation process;
- the advertisements should also be placed on the SFA website.

*The ICCP noted the good progress that had taken place in implementing the Communication Strategy and looked forward to these proposed adjustments to the advertisements. It also urged SFA to take up the interview slots that had been planned with SBC and the FM radio channels.*

### **Action Plan of the implementation of licencing related to coming into force of fisheries regulations.**

The SFA MCS Manager, Mr Johnny Louys, informed the meeting that there were already inspection plans and protocols prepared including for measurement and monitoring of other fisheries such as for the semi-industrial fishery. All that remained was to start implementation in January 2022. He noted that there were already patrols over the weekends, that visits were also made to restaurants, and that MCS is a 24-hr by 7-day activity. Also, that the MCS unit had the personnel to address any fishing offences and that an additional hotline would be established in January 2022 for the Co-management Plan regulations. Training of enforcement officers had already been undertaken. Licences and permits are in preparation these would also include licencing of recreational and sports fishers. The licencing framework was not solely for the Mahe Plateau Co-management Plan but was to be applied across all other fisheries including the industrial fishery. *The first draft was ready and once internal SFA comments had been received, it could be presented to the ICCP.* There would be three internal SFA training activities that were planned to take place before 1 January 2022: on compliance; on advanced data analysis; and, on measuring of fish species.

Discussions followed on the practical measures of measuring and releasing undersized fish with minimum trauma to increase their survival. *The ICCP meeting considered this a promising area for more practical work and attention in 2022. The Representative for Recreational fishers (with experience in catch and release trials) offered to assist.* A fisher association representative questioned what would happen if some fishers did not have VMS on their vessel, were not commercially licenced, and did not adhere to the stipulated number of traps. He cautioned SFA and the Liaison Officer to be prepared for a lot of questions on the regulations. Fisher association representatives also commented that there were many fishers who had obtained a commercial fisher licence but who didn't fish commercially and had other occupations. They considered that SFA had given these persons licences without proper checks, and sometimes commercial licences has been requested purely for a place to moor their boats. Also, that there was need to equip boats to legally measure and tag fishes. *The Chair requested that SFA look at practical and cost-effective measuring options including providing such facilities at fish markets.*

Discussion acknowledged that fisher associations had a major role to play in deciding who is a bona fide commercial fisher, and that there was need to recognise the professionalism or trade of a fisher person more widely across the society. There was need for consideration of the appropriate criteria such as being a member (and paying the appropriate dues) to a registered fisher association. SFA, with the assistance of the Liaison Officer could play an important role in empowering fisher

associations. *The Chair requested that the Secretariat raise this for a more profound discussion which could lead to concrete proposals in a separate ICCP meeting.*

### **Ongoing process of stock assessment of the fish stocks of the Mahé Plateau.**

The SFA Research Manager, Mr Rodney Govinden, informed the meeting that the last stock assessment made had been 5 years previously and that SFA was undertaking a new stock assessment with the support of the SWIOFish3 project and the technical assistance of James Robinson as a stock assessment expert (see also working document ICCP12/WD/5). This would be continued up to mid-December and a report had been submitted. The objective of the exercise was to establish standardised measures of fish abundance (catch per unit of effort - CPUE), determine the status of the fish stocks, examine the population age structure of the bourzwa and zob (through modelling) and to mentor/build capacity of SFA staff. He proceeded with a presentation, which is found in Appendix 4, that comprised:

- the stock assessment process;
- standardised CPUE by type of vessel;
- standardised CPUE by trapfish and line fish species;
- assessment of zob and bourzwa against their Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY);
- a traffic-light system of the stock status of trap and line fish species over the years 2000 to 2019.

The stock assessment process had recommended management options for four species groups. Other recommendations included the need to enhance fisheries data collection and to link VMS data to catch records. Subsequent assessments should seek to include pre-2000 data within the stock assessment models. Also, data from the catch assessment surveys and biological monitoring should be routinely analysed.

Following the presentation, several questions were raised on the standardisation of CPUE (did it compensate for movement of fishing effort offshore), on the source and reliability of the catch data, on the possibility of lower CPUEs being a result of marketing constraints (bourzwa) or low consumer demand (bekun) rather than overexploitation.

The Chairperson highlighted the difficulty of translating stock assessment technical terms from English into Kreol. Kreol words may not yet exist, and he provided a simple Kreol explanation of the concept of MSY. Eventually the stock assessment results would have to be communicated to fishers in a form which could be more easily understood. *The ICCP was informed that the establishment of ICCP Subcommittee planned for the present meeting would be postponed to a subsequent meeting because of time constraints.* The proposed ICCP Subcommittee would be the means of examining the stock assessment process and its results in detail and the stock assessment expert would have to address any issues or concerns including those expressed at this meeting. The Subcommittee would be tasked to subsequently report the stock assessment results and recommendations back to the ICCP in an easily understandable manner.

### **A workplan for the ICCP in 2022.**

Mr Aubrey Harris, Consultant, presented a workplan for the ICCP in 2022 based on working document ICCP12/WD/6. The previous ICCP annual workplan had been approved at the 8<sup>th</sup> ICCP of 11 December 2020. He traced the achievements of that workplan which included recruitment of a Fisheries Liaison Officer, the preparation and implementation of a Communication Strategy,

preparations of the SFA Enforcement section to effectively enforce the regulations, gazetting of the Mahe Trap and Line Fishery Regulations, and the launch of the Co-management plan on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2021 instead of 1<sup>st</sup> March as originally planned. Six ICCP meetings had been planned for 2021 but only four could be held. Actual outcomes of the 2021 plan were largely completed though delayed because of the Covid19 situation.

The ICCP workplan for 2022 (see Appendix 6) proposed holding 5 ICCP meetings in the weeks starting 21 February, 2 May, 4 July, 19 September and 12 December. Their objectives would include: review of communication, sensitisation, and enforcement/licencing activities; stock assessment understanding and review; mid-year progress in Co-management Plan implementation; status of overseas management plan exchange tours; open discussion on all Co-management Plan matters, socio-economic assessment, and management measures; and, decisions and recommendation for management in 2023. The workplan also proposed that SFA hold an open day in December 2022 where, among other matters, the members of the ICCP can meet with other stakeholders and the public, explain their work and contributions, and present the proposed regulations and ICCP work for 2023.

Following the presentation, fisher association members raised that they were happy to contribute to the ICCP meetings but that as self-employed persons this came at a cost of losing one day of fishing for each meeting. This also had impact on the other fishers that usually fish with them. They sought some compensation for this loss. This was noted by the Chairperson who found merit in the proposal but also noted that it had budgetary costs on SFA that had also to be taken into consideration. Another proposal was the need for SFA to consider support towards the improved functioning of fisher associations to empower them in the co-management of the fishery. There would be need to firstly understand the constraints and problems of individual associations and this could be assisted by the Liaison Officer. It was noted that having a good association structure was important and likewise having some form of office and administrative personnel. There had been times previously when SFA had requested fisher associations to provide their needs for support when preparing its budget. Some associations said they had sent their requests for support to SFA but had not received a response. *The Chairperson undertook to raise both the compensation for attending ICCP meetings and the empowerment of fisher organisations with the SFA.*

*The ICCP workplan for 2022 was endorsed by its 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 3 December 2021.*

### **Other matters**

The Chair thanked all members of the ICCP for their participation and contribution in 2021, and in particular the fisher associations. He noted that despite Covid 19 significant progress had been made in 2021 and anticipated it would be even better next year, hopefully with less Covid19 issues. He wished all participants a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

### **Date and Place of the next meeting**

Along the lines set out in the 2022 ICCP workplan, the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting will take place on 25 February 2022, at a location to be decided by the Secretariat.

# Appendix 1

## Agenda

### PROVISIONAL AGENDA

#### 1. Opening to the Meeting

*Remarks by the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy (MFBE)/Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA)*

#### 2. Adoption of the agenda

*To be moved by the Chairperson.*

#### 3. Developments since the last meeting

*The ICCP will be briefed on the developments since the 11<sup>th</sup> ICCP meeting (24 September 2021) including the launch of the Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan; recruitment of a Fisheries Liaison Officer; actions of the Communication Strategy; preparations of the MCS section; and any other relevant developments from the Secretariat.*

#### 4. Update on the Communication Strategy

*The Communication Strategy has been operating since before the October 2021 launch of the Co-management Plan. The meeting will be updated on the progress it has made and of publicity, education and sensitisation activities in progress up to the 1st of January 2021.*

#### 5. Action Plan of the implementation of licencing related to coming into force of fisheries regulations.

*At its last meeting the ICCP discussed enforcement processes including licencing that would be required for the coming into force of the Fisheries (Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery) Regulation 2021. Following up on these discussions, SFA will present existing licence proposals and an action plan of the implementation of activities such as issuance of the different permits, type and registration of trap tags etc required by the legislation. This will include clarification of the matter of private yachts fishing on entry in the Seychelles EEZ, or subsequently when in the Seychelles without any permits.*

#### 6. Ongoing process of stock assessment of the fish stocks of the Mahé Plateau.

*At its last meeting the ICCP was informed that an assessment of the fish stocks relevant to the Co-management Plan, was ongoing. The meeting will be further informed of this assessment, some of its preliminary indications and will be asked to decide how to become substantively engaged in this process through a sub-committee, or otherwise.*

#### 7. A workplan for the ICCP in 2022.

*The ICCP endorsed its workplan for 2021 at its 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 11 December 2021. The workplan was revised at the 9<sup>th</sup> ICCP with the postponement of launch of the Co-management Plan to October 2021. A summary of the activities of the ICCP in 2021 and a workplan for 2022 will be presented.*

#### 8. Other matters

#### 9. Date and place of the next meeting

## Appendix 2

### List of Documents circulated in advance of the meeting

#### **Working documents**

ICCP12/WD/1. Agenda

ICCP12/WD/2. Developments since the last meeting

ICCP12/WD/3. Update of the Communication Strategy

ICCP12/WD/4. Action Plan of the implementation of licensing related to coming into force of fisheries regulations [NOT PROVIDED]

ICCP12/WD/5. Update on the stock assessment process

ICCP12/WD/6. A proposed workplan for the implementation of the Co-management Plan in 2022.

#### **Information documents**

ICCP12/ID/1. List of Documents

ICCP12/ID/2. Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> ICCP meeting of 24 September 2021.

## Appendix 3

### List of Participants

#### Members, other Stakeholders and Secretariat

<b>Members</b>	
Rodney Nicole	Bel Ombre Fishers Association
Philippe Michaud	Department of Blue Economy, MFBE
Roy Clarisse	Department of Fisheries, MFBE
Wilna Accouche	Green Island Foundation
Ray Payet	La Digue Fishers Association
Kevin Moumou	Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment
Faizal Suleman	Recreational Fisher
Therence Labrosse	Roche Caiman Fishers Association
Johnny Louys	Seychelles Fishing Authority
<b>Other Stakeholders</b>	
Albert Napier	Apostolat de la Mer
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Elisa Socrates	Assistant-Manager, Resource Management (SFA)
Aubrey Harris	Consultant (SFA)
Joanne Lucas	Fisheries Officer, Resource Management (SFA)
Yannick Roucou	Legal Adviser (SFA)
Frank Volcere	Liaison Officer (SFA)
Rodney Govinden	Manager, Fisheries Research (SFA)
Marie Rignace	Marketing Consultant, Com & Click



## Appendix 4

### Communication Strategy

[See the attached PDF file of the presentation]

## Appendix 5

### Communication Strategy

[See the attached PDF file of the presentation]

## Appendix 6

### ICCP Workplan for 2022

[See the attached PDF file of the presentation]