

MINUTES 13th MEETING
IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
OF THE
MAHÉ PLATEAU TRAP AND LINE FISHERY CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

STC Conference meeting room, Latanier Road, Victoria, Mahe

Friday 4 March 2022

10:00 A.M.

Introduction

The 13th 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 4th of March 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 welcomed especially the representative of the Praslin Fishers Association (PFA) on his return to good health and the alternate of the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club (SSFC) also from Praslin, his first attendance at an ICCP meeting.

Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting proceeded with the chairperson, Mr Roy Clarisse, PS, Department of Fisheries, MFBE. There was a short discussion on whether the Election of Officers should be moved to later in the agenda, but in deference to those members that had made sure they arrived on time for the meeting, the agenda as presented in Appendix 1 was approved. The list of documents circulated in advance of the meeting is in Appendix 2. 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 9 ICCP 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.

Election of Officers

The Secretariat explained the process of election as described in working document ICCP13/WD/2 circulated in advance of the meeting. Only the Vice-Chairperson position was due for election and the Secretariat explained the functions and responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson. The last election had been held at the 3rd ICCP meeting on 27 March 2019 when the FBOA (now SFBOA) representative was elected as Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson holds office for a period of two years and may be eligible for re-election. It was noted that the Chairperson of the ICCP is nominated by the Minister and remains in office until the nomination of a new Chairperson by the Minister. Mr Roy Clarisse, Principal Secretary, MFBE, had been nominated as the Chairperson by Minister Jean-Francois Ferrari at the 9th ICCP meeting on 30 April 2021. Because the Chairperson is

from the secondary stakeholder group, the Vice-Chairperson had to be elected from the primary¹ stakeholder group by all the ICCP members present at the meeting.

The election proceeded by paper ballot. The results were Praslin Fishers Association (6 votes), Bel-ombre Fishers association (3 votes).

The 13th ICCP meeting elected the Praslin Fishers Association as the member that would provide the Vice-Chairperson of the ICCP. The ICCP greeted the representative of the Praslin Fishers Association, Mr Darrel Green, with applause. He thanked the members for their support and confidence in his association and undertook that it would contribute actively to the work of the ICCP.

Developments since the last meeting

As this was the first meeting of the year, the Chair recapped some of the important developments of the previous year. This had included the successful launch of the Co-management Plan on 1 October 2021. In the year ahead the approach should be on comprehensive education of fishers while emphasis on compliance should be directed more at pleasure and sport fishers, hotels, restaurants and fish outlets. He commended the measures that the PFA was promoting among its members reserving Baie St Anne Bay primarily for fishing during the rough SE monsoon season encouraging them to fish outside the bay in the calmer NW monsoon.

The Fisheries Liaison officer informed that he had been visiting Fisher associations providing information on the Co-management Plan since the last meeting. Generally, the attendance at these meetings was poor and fishers said that they had not heard the communication before.

The Chair drew attention of the need to take consideration of the reality on the ground. The awareness campaign had started only a week before the launch in October 2021. There was need for a soft enforcement approach with warnings being given on infringements. Where there were intentional repetitions of infringements, then measures may be taken.

The contributions received from ICCP members included:

- There was need to encounter with all fishers and explain the regulations in detail so that all registered fishers can clearly understand them.
- It was time to get moving, time was running out to address the sustainability of fish stocks. There was need for a clear time frame for enforcement.
- A clear indication was required on what had been done about the regulatory measures.
- SFA had done little about trap mesh sizes and construction.

Regarding trap mesh sizes, this was not currently in the fisheries regulations but would come in revised regulations likely next year. SFA was still working on a licencing framework, there was no survey of the number of traps, and it was still working on a reliable method of marking the traps.

The Chair emphasised the importance of fisher associations attending the ICCP meetings, representing their member's needs, but also passing information back to their members. They also should nominate an alternate to attend the meeting when the representative was not able to.

¹ "Primary stakeholders" are those that benefit directly from or are adversely affected by actions of the management plan. They may be wholly dependent on the fishery resource or related services for their well-being and have few other options when faced with change. [e.g., fisher associations, fishing hireboat operators, fish processors]. "Secondary stakeholders" are those other people and institutions with a stake or interest in the resources, services or area being considered [e.g., Government agencies, NGOs, recreational and sport fishers].

It was noted that FBOA (SFBOA) had not attended several ICCP meetings. The Secretariat informed that Mr Keith Andre was still chair of the association. SFBOA had been contacted in advance of this meeting. It would be contacted again before the next meeting and a final decision taken on its membership of the ICCP.

Following a proposal by an association, the *ICCP agreed that all ICCP member representatives of associations and NGOs be required to provide their registration papers, constitution and member details.*

Evaluation of the impact of the Communication Strategy

Ms Marie Rignace, Marketing Consultant of Com & Click, provided the outcomes and recommendations of Communications strategy based on working document ICCP13/WD/4.

Com & Click had ended the provision of its services in January 2022 and produced its report circulated previously as information document ICCP13/ID/3. Com & Click believed that the Communication Strategy had been a first communication step. The measures were new, it would take time for target audiences to assimilate the information and put it into practice. It suggested that there was need to continue the communication and awareness campaign through different channels for a further 6 months, and to include the following activities:

- *Schools-awareness campaign* (teachers and students) – build up on what had been started, including teaching books/ kits related to sustainable fisheries in partnership with the Ministry of Education, and further undertake workshops with teachers
- *Billboards in landing sites and bazaar* to sensitize the public, remind them of the measures and discourage them from buying fishes in contravention of the regulations.
- *A Cooking Show* to teach the public recipes for fish species not currently under fishing pressure. The cooking show would raise awareness of these species and encourage their purchase instead of bourzwa and zob gri.
- *Continue the communication campaign on social media* - a 4-month on social media campaign of the Co-management Plan, its measures and sustainable fishing.

The meeting was informed that the SFA Fisheries Management Group has also been considering continuing the awareness and publicity related to the Mahe Plateau trap and line fishery Co-management Plan and its fisheries measures.

In the subsequent discussions, the following was expressed:

- ICCP meetings should have TV coverage
- More focus on fishers to be given in the publicity
- Publicity must not give the impression that fishers are the prime target. It should rather be on sports fishers, private wealthy recreational fishers.
- The material was sometimes considered too intellectual
- Information on the minimum size should be forefront and talk of the town
- Communications need to put the fishers on SFA's side
- Possibility of cooler bags with educational material
- needs more material that could be placed on SPTC buses, there may be need to re-work some of the graphics.
- More contact and focus needed with hotel associations and restaurants
- proposals that were presented heavily focused on kids and teachers, there is still more need to educate the fishers.

- Who would really understand 32cm fork length? Will the measure stand up in a court of law?
- SFA should be driving the news and must have increased physical presence. It must continually be seen to be leading the way.
- Plastic measurement strip for fishing vessels and an easy measuring facility available at all fish markets. [this had been raised in several previous ICCP meetings]
- More visibility of the regulations and measures still needed.
- More balance towards enforcement needed. Are other laws also approached in such a manner, and with so much sensitivity. SFA risks sending very mixed message and subsequent reproached if it comes up with regulations and then does nothing about them. While education and sensitisation is important, understanding of the regulations will not really sink into stakeholders and the public until they are enforced.

It was acknowledged that the Com & Click Communication Strategy products and ads were of good quality and had been placed several times on TV, sometimes at prime time. These had been previously passed through the ICCP. Perhaps they were a bit short and insufficiently repeated. SFA considered that a survey of awareness of the regulations should be undertaken independently. Enforcement will have to include a carrot and a stick. Knowing when to use these was the crux of the matter. The approach should be of more communication in the first half of the year, MCS should be visible and drawing attention of the parties to the regulations and communicating to the parties. In the latter part of the year, the stick approach should be more in place. There were some novel communication initiatives already in progress such as in collaboration with SEYBREW, as well as to draw attention to the Co-management plan in all the fishing sites.

On penalties and on legally taking up infringements, this may be basic now, but the ICCP was informed that that there were graded sanctions and spot fines being incorporated a revision of the fisheries act of 2014. On the same subject, there was a need for SFA to publish its enforcement actions.

Chair summarised that we must start somewhere. It is up to SFA's MCS to implement the enforcement of the regulations. However, there was also need to understand the fisher situation and give SFA some more time in this process.

The ICCP recommended that SFA set up a Task Force to work on the publicity and sensitization, and the implementation of the regulations. It urged SFA to consider further communication and sensitisation in a more targeted manner.

Also, there needs to be a survey of the extent that people are aware of the regulations and are voluntarily complying or are non-compliant.

MCS of the Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line) Regulations 2021.

Mr Ronny Malvina, Enforcement Head of the SFA Fisheries Enforcement Unit, presented a workplan integrating the SFA MCS proposed actions and timelines to support the putting into effect the Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line fishery) regulations 2021. The MCS Action plan, which was circulated as ICCP/WD/5 in advance of this meeting, is shown in Appendix 4.

Mr Malvina explained that this action plan considers all the targets referred to in the regulations and raised in the previous agenda item on publicity and awareness. The Action Plan showed the measures of the regulation to be enforced (minimum fish length, bag limits, trap registration, prohibition of sale by sports and recreational fishers, requirement for permits, VMS), activities involved, responsible parties, and the period of start and end of activities in 2022. Enforcement would be undertaken by authorised fishery officers that have powers like the police and who can

take further action if there is any retaliation by the party under consideration. The Action Plan included a long period of soft enforcement from March until December 2022.

Comments on the Action Plan following its presentation included:

- Emphasis on hotels and restaurants needs to be captured.
- Suggestions were provided on the marking and numbering of fish traps
- SFA officers need to visit the sites and make checks sporadically
- As part of the soft approach, there is need to collect information on who are breaking the regulations.
- The soft enforcement period was too long – full enforcement should start in August.
- SSFC consists primarily of catch-and-release sports fishers
- Measuring tapes should be installed on boats and in markets [again]
- Does SFA really have the enforcement capacity for this?
- Where are we on recreational measures in this action plan?

The SFA Enforcement Unit undertook to take these considerations on board in implementing the action that had been presented. Following discussion on the period of soft enforcement, *the ICCP agreed that full enforcement of measures and prosecution as spelt out by the Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line) regulations 2021 should start on the 1 October 2022. Also, that SFA should publish its enforcement actions.*

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

The ICCP was updated on the stock assessment process based on working document ICCP13/WD/6 previously circulated. The ICCP had agreed to set up a Sub-committee that would involve some of its members in examining the stock assessment process and its results in detail, and address any issues or concerns such as those expressed at the 12th ICCP.

The ICCP agreed in principle with the Terms of Reference of this Sub-Committee which is shown in Annex 5. The Chair sought three ICCP members for the Sub-Committee. As offers to sit on the Sub-Committee were not forthcoming, the matter was deferred to the next meeting.

The Chairperson requested the Secretariat to re-circulate working document ICCP13/WD/6 and seek the willingness of 3 ICCP members to sit on the Sub-Committee.

Participation of fisher organizations and their empowerment to contribute meaningfully to Co-management.

Ms Elisa Socrates, Assistant-Manager, SFA Fisheries Resource Management, presented this Agenda item based on working document ICCP13/WD/7. The possibility of compensating ICCP members (such as fisher associations) had arisen in previous meetings.

She informed that the participants from Praslin and La Digue were re-imbursed their travel expenses (receipted cost of ticket, only) to attend the ICCP meetings. However as to compensation to attend a meeting such as a meeting allowance, the SFA and other project partners have found the Ministry of Finance and donor agencies do not permit such disbursement.

On SFA support to the functioning of fisher associations, MOUs existed with two fisher associations (FBOA and PFA) that are assisted with office space and a secretarial assistant. SFA required that fisher associations are formally registered, have proper structural and administrative frameworks in place and for their requests to be well justified in advance of SFA budget preparation before any support modalities could be considered. Importantly, there would be a need to firstly understand

the constraints and problems of individual associations, and this could be assisted through the work of the Liaison Officer.

Following the presentations, the following views were aired:

- My association is working for fishers, it does not claim everything, there is too much dependency on government, it is working for itself in ICCP meetings
- There is a risk of setting a bad precedent in paying meeting allowances
- There are different types of fisher associations, some have support, others don't. This is not fair
- My attendance as a representative of an association at this meeting involves sacrifice and cost not only to myself but to other fishers on my vessel, unable to fish on the day
- Maybe that is why we don't get much attendance of fisher associations
- The voice of fishers should be represented by their associations
- SFA was supposed to support us, we were promised support since June 2021, we have provided all the paperwork, our telephone was cut, we are embarrassed
- We are in problems because our association is being dislocated
- Officers of fisher associations need to be in a better position to represent their members

The SFA undertook to assist on some of the issues that had been raised with which it was already familiar. *The ICCP agreed that information on fisher associations should be collected to see their status and better understand their functioning and their aspirations as member associations.* Collating and analysing this information will provide a basis for SFA/ICCP/SWIOFish3 consideration of the possible modalities of assistance. In this process, collaboration with the Citizens Engagement Platform Seychelles (CEPS) should be sought as it can provide administrative services and support (e.g., meeting facilities, internet access, postal mailbox) as well as training and capacity development. It could also assist in the establishment of a federation.

Other matters

The meeting drew attention that the existing ICCP implementation process is in support of the first Co-management Plan of the Seychelles, an achievement of which all are entitled to be proud.

The SWIOFish1 Coordinator informed the meeting that SWIOFish1 had planned for Peer-to-Peer exchanges in the form of a visit by ICCP members to another country to further their knowledge about fisheries co-management. Covid19 has delayed this activity but travel conditions were now normalizing. The next ICCP meeting would have a working document and a presentation on this proposal.

The Chair thanked all members of the ICCP for their participation and contribution.

Date and Place of the next meeting

Along the lines set out in the 2022 ICCP workplan, the 14th Meeting will take place on 6 May 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. Election of Officers

The Vice-Chairperson position is due for election as the current (FBOA) was elected on 27 March 2019. Only primary stakeholder members are eligible as the Chairperson is a secondary stakeholder. The Vice-Chairperson's functions and responsibilities are described in the Rules of Procedure.

3. Adoption of the agenda

To be moved by the Chairperson.

4. Developments since the last meeting

The ICCP will be briefed on the developments since the 12th ICCP meeting (3rd December 2021) including the start of implementation of the regulations, relevant communication meetings and interviews, the work of the Liaison Officer and any other relevant matters from SFA and from the Secretariat.

5. Evaluation of the impact of the Communication Strategy

Implementation of the Communication Strategy started a couple of weeks before the October 2021 launch of the Co-management Plan. Implementation ceased in January 2022 and the service provider, Com & Click has provided its completion report. Following a presentation of the achievements of the Communication Strategy by the service provider, the ICCP will provide feedback and assessment of the impact of the Strategy and its recommendations of the way forward.

6. MCS of the Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line) Regulations 2021.

At its last meeting the ICCP was informed of inspection protocols that were ready to be acted on and a licencing framework that had been finalised. The meeting made practical cost-effective options that would assist the implementation of minimum fish sizes. The Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line) Regulations 2021 came into operation on 1st January 2022. The SFA MCS section will inform the ICCP of the activities that it has undertaken to assist fishers comply with the fisheries regulations to date and of its proposed activities in the period before the next ICCP meeting. The ICCP will provide feedback on the impact of these activities and their suggestions for the upcoming period.

7. Ongoing process of stock assessment of the fish stocks of the Mahé Plateau.

Following up on the last meeting, the ICCP will set up a Subcommittee to examine the 2021 Stock Assessment results in detail, clarify any uncertainties or concerns, consider the recommendations made and report back to the ICCP in subsequent meetings. Proposed TORs for this Subcommittee will be presented to the ICCP for its consideration and approval.

8. Participation of fisher organizations and their empowerment to contribute meaningfully to Co-management.

The last meeting raised some issues in relation to the participation of fisher organizations in meetings, and the need for their structural and administrative support. SFA will provide a response to the matters raised and proposals on strengthening fisher associations.

9. Other matters

- Update on a cartoon book

10. Date and place of the next meeting

Appendix 2

List of Documents circulated in advance of the meeting

Working documents

ICCP13/WD/1. Agenda

ICCP13/WD/2. Election of Officers

ICCP13/WD/3. Developments since the last meeting [NOT PROVIDED]

ICCP13/WD/4. Evaluation of the impact of the Communication Strategy

ICCP13/WD/5. MCS of the Fisheries (Mahe Plateau trap and line) Regulations 2021.

ICCP13/WD/6. Update on the stock assessment process

ICCP13/WD/7. Participation of fisher organizations and their empowerment

Information documents

ICCP13/ID/1. List of Documents

ICCP13/ID/2. Minutes of the 12th ICCP meeting of 3 December 2021.

ICCP13/ID/3. Development of a Communication Strategy in support of the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-management Plan. Final report by Com &Click, January 2022.

ICCP13/ID/4. Preliminary draft of a fisheries cartoon book by Peter Lalande

Appendix 3

List of Participants

Members, other Stakeholders and Secretariat

Members	
Rodney Nicole	Bel Ombre Fishers Association
Philippe Michaud	Department of Blue Economy, MFBE
Roy Clarisse	Department of Fisheries, MFBE
Wilna Accouche	Green Island Foundation
Darrel Green, Graham Green	Praslin Fishers Association
Faizal Suleman	Recreational Fisher representative
Therence Labrosse	Roche Caiman Fishers Association
Nicole Elizabeth, Ebrahim Ameer	Seychelles Fishing Authority
Mervin Dugasse	Seychelles Sports Fishers Club (Praslin)
Other Stakeholders	
Albert Napier	Apostolat de la Mer
Secretariat	
Ronny Malvina	Assistant-Manager, Enforcement, MCS (SFA)
Elisa Socrates	Assistant-Manager, Resource Management (SFA)
Aubrey Harris	Consultant (SFA)
Jan Robinson	Coordinator, SWIOFish1 project (MFBE)
Estelle Barreau	Fisheries analyst, Resource Management (SFA)
Joanne Lucas	Fisheries Officer, Resource Management (SFA)
Mellissa Joseph	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 5

SEYCHELLES FISHING AUTHORITY

Implementation Committee of the Mahe Plateau trap and line Co- management Plan (ICCP)



SUB-COMMITTEE FOR FISH STOCK ASSESSMENT

Terms of Reference

March 2022

1. Background

The role of the ICCP is to oversee the implementation of the co-management plan for the demersal trap and line fishery of the Mahé Plateau and provide regular and ongoing recommendations to the Minister responsible for fisheries. It will discuss progress and recommend changes to the plan, have oversight on the plan's day to day management, and its related education, awareness and enforcement programmes. It will monitor the performance of the fishery in meeting its objectives, consider reports on compliance, on the status of fish stocks and changes to fisheries regulations. The Committee will ensure that its reports on the fishery are made publicly available.

This Subcommittee is set up to assist the ICCP in its responsibilities

2. Mandate of the Sub-Committee for Fish Stock Assessment

The mandate of the Sub-Committee for Fish Stock Assessment is to assist the ICCP in considering reports on the status of fish stocks and providing advice to the ICCP in matters relating to fish stock assessment

3. Composition of the Sub-Committee for Fish Stock Assessment

3.1. Sub-Committee Members

The Sub-Committee shall consist of at least three ICCP members, four SFA staff (two from the Research Division, one from the Fisheries Management Division, one from the Statistics Division) and one external member with skills in stock assessment.

3.2. Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Sub-Committee shall be appointed by the ICCP. In the absence of the Chairperson, another Sub-Committee member shall be appointed as the Designated Chairperson by the other Sub-Committee members.

3.3. Invitees

The Sub-Committee may invite any person it deems fit on an ad-hoc basis in relation to the work of the Sub-Committee to attend to a meeting of the Sub-Committee.

3.4. Secretariat

The SFA shall facilitate and coordinate meetings as well as provide ancillary support to the Sub-Committee.

4. Lifespan of the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee shall exist for the duration of the Chairperson of the ICCP, or for such other time as decided by the ICCP.

5. The Scope and Functions of the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee shall:

- Establish a monitoring system for assessing the status of fish stocks. Fish stocks under consideration of this Sub-Committee shall be those of the Mahe Plateau trap and line fishery Co-management Plan.
- Provide feedback to the ICCP on establishing a framework for monitoring and assessment of fish stocks.
- Report to the ICCP on the status of fish stocks in a correct but easily understandable manner and of the possible management measures or harvest strategies that are indicated by these assessments
- Provide feedback and advice to the ICCP on relevant or upcoming stock assessment issues
- Encourage the ICCP to place more emphasis on the fish stocks under the ICCP's purview.
- Encourage SFA to review its data collection programmes, automate certain types of data analysis, increase the availability of analysed data, and assess their relevance, scope and usefulness
- Address other stock fish stock assessment and related fisheries management issues that may be requested of it by the ICCP.

6. Proceedings

6.1. Meetings of the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee shall meet, as may be required, but at least twice a year.

6.2. Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Sub-Committee shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of Members.

6.3. Reporting

The Sub-Committee shall report the results of its proceedings to the ICCP. The ICCP shall receive occasional reports or updates from the Sub-Committee on the assessment of particular fish stocks/species/groups for its consideration. The Sub-Committee shall prepare and submit an annual report of its proceedings to the ICCP

7. Approval

The Terms of Reference was recommended to ICCP by the Chairperson of the ICCP and was approved by the ICCP on the, represented by the Chairperson of the ICCP.

The Chairperson of the Sub-Committee Date:

The Chairperson of the ICCP Date: