

**MINUTES 11<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 24 September 2021

10:00 A.M.

**Introduction**

The 11<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 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2021.

**Opening to the meeting**

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

**Adoption of the Agenda**

The meeting proceeded with the chairperson, Mr Roy Clarisse, PS, Department of Fisheries, MFBE. The agenda (Appendix 1) was approved. This 11th 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 Public Health Authority (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 11 members and two observers (other fisher associations). Participants were at liberty to use whichever of the three national languages they preferred. The list of participants is presented in Appendix 2.

**Developments since the last meeting**

Mr Aubrey Harris, Consultant, informed the meeting of the developments since the last meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> August based on working paper ICCP11-WD-2. Since the last meeting, the draft Fisheries (Mahé Plateau trap and line fishery) Regulations 2020 had been signed by the Minister and gazetted as Statutory Instrument 77 on the 13 September 2021. The Regulations would come into operation subsequently. A suitable candidate Fishery Liaison Officer had been found following a revision of the terms of reference to emphasise the person's fisher liaison duties rather than his/her contribution to the communication strategy, since that had already progressed significantly. Administrative arrangements were still in progress and the person was expected to start on liaison activities soon before or after the launch of the Co-management Plan. The Communication Strategy has continued to be fine-tuned and products such as on the SFA website and social media were being launched. Com & Click would be presenting information on these products later in the meeting. The status quo existed as to the preparations of the MCS Section for the launching of the Co-management Plan and

this would be also discussed later in the meeting. The Secretariat had been contacting members to seek alternates for the Hire Boat representative and the Sports Fishers representative possibly from Praslin or La Digue, but these were yet to be nominated.

In the discussions that followed, the Chairperson emphasised the need for having alternates and making sure that representatives consulted with and represented the views of their association members. Also, he informed that the enforcement of the Mahé Plateau trap and line fishery regulations would come into place on 1 January 2022 leaving a few more months for education and sensitisation.

### **Update of the Communication Strategy**

Ms Wilna Accouche, also Green Island Foundation Representative, presented an update of the Communication Strategy on behalf of Com & Click. This included:

- That the posters had been revised to be in all three national languages (English, French, Kreol), passed to SFA and available for the launch next week.
- There would be a workshop with Eco-School leaders at the end of October.
- Noting a delay in the filming plan for the video clips for TV adverts because of unsuitable weather over the last two weeks.
- The video of Joe Sammy's song was under revision and would be available in two weeks' time.
- SFA's website was now current with the Co-management Plan information.
- Social media and Facebook text would be ready before the launch next week.
- A revised programme of communication activities over the next few months up till January 2022 (as was shown in working paper ICCP11-WD-3)

In the discussion that followed it was confirmed that footage of underwater fish had been received from the Seychelles Sports Fishers Club. Also, that the restaurant and seafood outlet posters would be in English, French and Kreol. A concern was raised as to the systems that would be in place to anticipate and respond promptly to questions raised about the Co-management Plan and its regulations as the communication strategy was rolled out. It was agreed that a process to deal with issues needs to be put in place. *SFA was asked to set up a focal person to promptly answer any burning issues. The Fisheries Liaison Officer should also be involved in this process which may also involve the setting up of a hotline – one would be set up by the SFA MCS section. These issues should also subsequently be brought to the attention of the ICCP.* For some issues related to the impact of the Co-management Plan, SWIOFish1 informed that it had a Grievance Committee that dealt with its project activities, which could assist, noting though that the prime responsibility was with the SFA. Fisher representatives raised the importance of meetings with their associations as part of the Communication Strategy. Concern was also expressed by the meeting that there should not be much delay following the launch of the Co-management Plan in rolling out communication activities and products, to keep the momentum until the coming into force next year. The timeline for fisher association meetings and Bonzour Sesel talks should be moved to October, after the launch of the Co-management Plan instead of November /December.

## Proposed Enforcement of the Mahé Plateau Regulations and the Processes Involved

The SFA MCS Manager, Mr Johnny Louys, informed that the processes of proposed enforcement were as had been explained at the last meeting and was covered in working document ICCP11-WD-4. He confirmed that the MCS Protocol that had been prepared last year was still valid and would be implemented.

With regard to a matter raised at the last meeting on enforcement around Eden Island, the Chairperson informed the meeting that Seychelles Maritime and Safety Authority (SMSA) had informed him that it did not have an asset to place just off Eden Island waters for surveillance of outgoing or incoming vessels, but that an MOU had been signed by SMSA, Seychelles Port Authority (SPA) and Eden Island with responsibilities of collaboration and cooperation to ensure that the relevant regulations are adhered to. *The ICCP recommended that SFA seek to be part of such an MOU to facilitate the adherence to the Fisheries (Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery) Regulations 2021.* One of the fisher associations wanted clarification of the licences that would be required under the regulations and to know if SFA was able to issue all the recreational and sportfishing licences that would be involved. For example, would these be for one year or for a longer period. SFA's response was that it was preparing a framework for the licences, and that licences would be for one year and renewable each year. *The SFA MCS Manager offered to submit proposals that already existed for establishing these licences to a subsequent ICCP meeting.* The discussions also raised the related issue of trap tags and how these would be implemented. It was pointed out that it would not reflect well if the regulations came in force whilst the ability to acquire the related licences was not in place. *The Chairperson requested that SFA prepare an action plan of the implementation of related activities such as issuance of the different permits, type and registration of trap tags etc so that these would be all in place before 1 January 2022, for presentation to the next ICCP meeting.* The ICCP could assist by advising on some of these activities and of the related timelines. This was agreed to by SFA.

Discussions continued regarding clarification of hire-craft licences (SMSA responsibility), sports fishing (SFA) and recreational fishing (SFA) licences. It was proposed that recreational fishing licences should be available online (to be in line with best overseas practices and facilitate access by tourists) – SFA was already in the process of establishing this for all fishing licences. The meeting also engaged on the issue of private yachts fishing on entry in the Seychelles EEZ, or subsequently when in the Seychelles without any permits. SFA clarified that these vessels were fishing illegally (Illegal, Unregulated, Unreported) and the view was expressed at the meeting that they are not adequately covered in the fisheries legislation. Previous discussions in the ICCP are covered below<sup>1</sup>. *The Chairperson decided that this issue should be followed up more substantially in a subsequent meeting with the support of SFA's legal advice on this matter.*

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<sup>1</sup> **4<sup>th</sup> ICCP, 15 May 2019** – lack of control of recreational fishing particularly of superyachts, and entry into the EEZ raised. SFA to send letter to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, AG's Office, Ministry of Home Affairs to raise attention to issue of superyachts contravening fisheries legislation, seeking advice to be followed. SFA, also, to seek information from the MSP process. **5<sup>th</sup> ICCP, 26 June 2019** – SFA letter to Min. of FA etc, not sent as needed more tangible information. MSP provided information from its legal advisor which was passed to the MCS Manager. Chairperson proposed that this is taken up by MFAG. **6<sup>th</sup> ICCP, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020** – Meeting was informed that the revision of Custom Management Regulations (Export Permits) should prevent areas of problem exports of fish such as from Eden Island.

## Consideration of the launch of the Co-management Plan

Ms Elisa Socrates, SFA Principal Fisheries Officer, presented working document ICCP11-WD-5 on preparation for the launch of the Co-management Plan. She traced the history of the ICCP meetings, enumerated the key elements of the launch as has been planned by the ICCP and noted that these were now in place. She proceeded to go through a programme for the launch day that would be held at Eden Bleu.

The ICCP made the following comments on the programme of the launch:

- Complimentary data keys to be handed to participants at the launch should contain information on the Co-management Plan, presentations by speakers, poster photos of commercial fishes etc.
- The Minister's speech should highlight that this is a momentous occasion of the launch of the first management plan which follows best international practice, and which is of relevance to other countries in this region.
- SFA confirmed that all the ICCP members had been invited as well as all the fisher associations and other relevant stakeholders.
- The panel discussion needed to be better planned by the team preparing for the launch
- The speeches and presentations should be interspersed with video clips of the views of commercial, recreational and sports fishers.
- It was not a 'Workshop' but rather a 'Launch'
- It was important and urgent that adverts were put out prior to the Launch. In addition to the approved social media adverts, at least one TV advert informing the public of the launch should be put out. This should also be done for radio adverts.

## Other matters

It was confirmed that the ICCP would continue its work after the Launch, and receive feedback from the Communication Strategy, and provide its advice, before the coming into place of the regulations on 1 January 2022. *A revised workplan for 2022 would be presented at the next ICCP meeting.*

SWIOFish1 informed that the draft results of ongoing assessment of the fish stocks would be available for consideration of the ICCP in the next meetings of the ICCP. Also, that:

- There would be a call for a Socio-Economic assessment of the Co-management Plan made in the following week. The assessment would only be completed after the first year of implementation of the regulations. Baseline information, available before or early in 2022, would be used in the assessment.
- It was preparing for Phase 2 of the Co-management Plan. Among other things, this would include implementation of a licensing framework and a revised incentive scheme.
- Capacity building activities for the ICCP members (including exchange visits to other countries with similar management plans) were being considered now that COVID travel conditions were improving.

The meeting discussed some of the issues related to fisher associations. It was strongly agreed that fisher associations needed to be strengthened (Anse aux Pins, for example, still had to formally establish an association). The issue of releasing bourzwa and job smaller than 32 cm was likely to raise a negative reaction with many fishers. Also, in assessing the impacts of the measures, it was important to consider that trap fishers are the ones that would be most affected by these measures,

as they would be protecting smaller bourzwa for the take at larger sizes by the line fishers further offshore.

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

The ICCP agreed that the next meeting should take place before the end of the year, and at a time where feedback from fishers on some of the messages of the Communication Strategy could be considered.

# Appendix 1

## 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 10<sup>th</sup> ICCP meeting (30 August 2021) including gazetting of the draft Fisheries (Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery) regulations 2021; recruitment of a Fisheries Liaison Officer; status of the Communication Strategy; preparations of the MCS section; and any other relevant developments from the Secretariat.*

### **4. Update on the Communication Strategy and publicity**

*The Communication Strategy is operating and ready for the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 launch. The meeting will be updated on elements of the Communication Strategy's publicity, education and sensitisation underpinning the Co-Management Plan.*

### **5. Proposed enforcement of the Mahé Plateau regulations**

*The SFA MCS section will update the meeting of preparations for the coming into force of the Fisheries (Mahé Plateau Trap and Line Fishery) Regulations 2021 including processes and actions that it proposes to take to encourage and ensure that all relevant parties abide by the regulations.*

### **6. Launch of the Co-management Plan**

*The ICCP will be informed of the arrangements prepared for the first day of the launch of the Co-management Plan for its consideration and advice.*

### **7. Other matters**

### **8. Date and place of the next meeting**

## Appendix 2

### 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 / Madiha Philo (online)	Department of Fisheries, MFBE
Wilna Accouche	Green Island Foundation
Jean-Claude Hoareau	FishTech
Michael Mason	Hire Craft Association
Ray Payet	La Digue Fishers Association
Ashley Dias (online)	Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment
Faizal Suleman	Recreational Fisher
Therence Labrosse	Roche Caiman Fishers Association
Nichol Elizabeth	Seychelles Fishing Authority
<b>Other Stakeholders</b>	
Théophane Estro	Anse aux Pins Fishers Association
Allen Boniface	Anse Boileau Fishers Association
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Aubrey Harris	Consultant (SFA)
Jan Robinson	Co-ordinator, SWIOFish3 Project
Joanne Lucas	Fisheries Officer (SFA)
Yannick Roucou	Legal Adviser (SFA)
Johnny Louys	MCS Manager (SFA)
Elisa Socrate	Principal Fisheries Officer (SFA)

## Appendix 3

### Communication Strategy

[See the attached PDF file of the presentation]