



MINUTES SSC/2016/12
1 February 2017
10:00 am EST - Via Conference Call

Participants:

Dr. Tammy Trott, Commission Acting Chair
Dr. Billy Causey, Commissioner
Prof. Stephen de Mora, Commissioner
Prof. Howard Roe, Commissioner
Prof. Ricardo Santos, Commissioner
Dr. David Freestone, Executive Secretary
(Apologies, Mr. Mark Spalding, Commissioner)

1. Revised Minutes of 21 September 2016 Meeting (SSC/2016/10) and 10 November 2016 (SSC/2016/11)

APPROVED.

2. **Executive Secretary** presented an update of Work Programme implementation to-date:

- 2.1 Signatories

- Canada signed the Hamilton Declaration December 2016; the Executive Secretary following up with Canadian focal point.
- Cayman Islands signed the Declaration in January 2017. Still need a focal point.
- Other active inquiries include a letter of invitation from Minister Simons to the Chinese Ambassador to UK; Executive Secretary following up with Costa Rica.
- Joint Meeting in Horta, Azores scheduled for 18-19 April 2017. Azores Gov. contributing c 10,000 Euros for hotel and conference facilities. Participants may be able to attend the AIR Centre meeting 20-22 April, a short flight from Horta. The **Executive Secretary** requested the **Commissioners** to provide **Faith as soon as possible** their preferred dates of travel - arrangements will need to be confirmed shortly.

- Invitees to the Joint Meeting may also include representatives of Portugal, the EU, Sweden, , Portugal and Belgium, as well as the Netherlands. Commissioner Santos requested that invite for Robert Calcagno CEO Monaco Oceanographic Institute. The **Secretariat** plans to invite colleagues from collaborating organizations to participate including Dr Bradnee Chambers, Executive Secretary of the CMS, and Michael Lodge, the Executive Secretary of the ISA.

2.2 Commission

- Stewardship Plan review process is underway with a deadline of 20 February for edits and comments. The plan requires close review from the **Commissioners**. The plan will be a Commission proposal to the Signatory Governments so it was agreed that **unanimous approval** of the Stewardship Plan is necessary.
- Questions were raised regarding the audience and purpose of the Stewardship Plan. It was noted that the plan is dynamic but represents an overarching reference document for future work of the Sargasso Sea Commission; it is not a funding proposal but could serve as the basis for proposals to donors.
- A separate **Commission** call to discuss the stewardship plan was agreed.
- Commission nomination process will be important this year. **Commissioners Trott and Santos's** terms expire. It can be expected there will be nominations from the four new government signatories. The **Executive Secretary** will send around information on the nomination process for the Commissioners' reference. **Commissioner Santos** noted that he will be pleased to collaborate with the Commission whether or not he continues as a Commissioner.

2.3 Collaborating Partners

- The **Executive Secretary** is negotiating an MOU that would specifically apply to UNEP Abidjan and UNEP Cartagena.
- The **Executive Secretary** noted that the draft MOU with ISA, put on hold pending the Observer status application, is being revived.
- Budget permitting, participation in the IUCN delegation to the upcoming UN Prep Com 3 is possible.
- The **Executive Secretary** has connected International SeaKeepers Society with Prof Chuanmin Hu's research on *Sargassum* tracking to develop a citizen research project for the America's Cup this summer related to *Sargassum*.

2.4 Fisheries

- **Commissioner Trott** reported on the Sargasso Sea Resolution at the ICCAT Commission Meeting November 2016, supported by Canada and South Africa; it had needed amending to prevent veto by Japan. The final resolution that was adopted did not specifically mention the Sargasso Sea, although it is

in the preamble; it is seen as allowing the Sargasso Sea work in the Ecosystem Subcommittee to continue.

- **Commissioners Trott and Roe** are working with Dr Brian Luckhurst to develop a proposal for next steps in 2017.

2.5 Shipping

- **Commissioner de Mora** reported on the Session co-sponsored by the SSC and Marviva at the World Ocean Council Sustainable Ocean Summit in Rotterdam in December 2016. Chair Vousden had provided a summary – **Executive Secretary** will circulate. Commission noted his report and its recommendations – but decided to follow up with Marviva direct.
- **Commissioner de Mora** mentioned the idea of a Sargasso Sea Mariners poster as an example of one successful outreach option. The **Executive Secretary** noted that there are still some of these posters in stock but should pursue options to promote it again and possibly develop an online option that could be emailed or downloaded by ship operators or crew.
- The **Commission** noted the recommendations of the Meeting.
- The Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO) was mentioned as a possible avenue to increase interaction with the industry.
- The **Executive Secretary** plans to conduct a monthly call with the PS of the Bermuda Ministry of the Environment and will be pursuing the issue of how to engage with the cruise ship industry in Bermuda.

2.6 Sea Bed

- See above on ISA MOU.

2.7 Migratory Species

- The draft report for the CMS *Anguilla Anguilla* range states workshop is still in review. The report should be final in a few weeks.
- It is possible that a second European Eel Range State meeting could be held this year in Malmo Sweden. There may be interest from the government of Sweden.

2.8 Finance and Fundraising Report

- **Commission** noted the 2017 Budget.
- Helmsley Trust has indicated the possibility of transitional funding to SSC as Helmsley cuts its environmental program.
- **Commissioner Trott** and **Executive Secretary Freestone** both discussed the offer from a young Bermudian ocean enthusiast to fundraise for the Commission by paddling into the Sargasso Sea for 24 hours. The **Secretariat** agreed to contact **Commissioner Spalding's** staff to determine the potential options.

2.9 Mapping and Monitoring

Commissioner Roe agreed to find out whether the NCL in Southampton has the capacity to review the cable survey data for the Commission.

3 Any Other Business

None.

4 Date of Next Meeting

- The Commission decided to hold a 1.5 hours call to discuss the stewardship plan, set for **1 March 2017** at 10 am EST.
- The next SSC meeting call was set for **22 March 2017** at 10 am EST.