



**MINUTES SSC/2017/14**  
**7 November 2017**  
**8:00 am EST - Via Zoom Conference Call**

**Participants:**

Dr. Billy Causey, Commissioner  
Mr. Frederico Cardigos, Commissioner  
Mr. Mark Spalding, Commissioner  
Sen. Wilfred Moore, Commissioner  
Dr. David Freestone, Executive Secretary  
(Apologies, Dr. Tammy Warren, Commission Acting Chair and Prof. Howard Roe, Prof. Stephen de Mora, Commissioners)

1. Revised Minutes of 25 July 2017 Meeting (MOS/SSC/2017/13)

**APPROVED.**

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

- 2.1 Signatories  
None.

- 2.2 Commission

- Two new Commissioners were appointed by the Government of Bermuda in October- **Sen. Wilfred Moore** and **Mr. Frederico Cardigos**. **Commissioner Warren** was renewed for a second term.
- The Sargasso Sea Commission will remain based at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The draft Stewardship Agenda was discussed at the Third Joint Meeting in the Azores in April 2017. The **Executive Secretary** will renew a request for comments from the Signatory Governments on the Stewardship Agenda. **Commissioner Spalding** offered to gather outside legal support to assist.
- The United Nations Second World Ocean Assessment is underway and has requested Commission input as it embarks on a revised process and format for the second version. **Commissioners Warren and Roe** and the **Executive**

**Secretary** will continue their involvement in the process on behalf of the Commission.

### 2.3 Collaborating Partners

- The University of Central Florida Marine Turtle Research Group has formally become a Collaborating Partner, thanks to the support of Dr Kate Mansfield. The **Executive Secretary** will follow up outstanding invitations.
- **Commissioner Cardigos** offered to connect with researchers at the Archie Carr Center for Turtle Research, and colleagues from the Azores.

### 2.4 Fisheries

- Dr Brian Luckhurst attended the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Ecosystem subcommittee meeting in Madrid in July and presented a paper on squid in the Sargasso Sea food chain that was well received. He and **Commissioner Warren** will attend the 25<sup>th</sup> ICCAT Regular Meeting next week. **Commissioner Cardigos** noted that the Azores may present a declaration supporting the sustainability of pole-and-line fisheries, which he will distribute to the Commission.
- Dr Laurie Kell, who recently retired from ICCAT, will be assisting the Commission's ICCAT focus group on an ecosystem-based fisheries management assessment of the Sargasso Sea.

### 2.5 Shipping

- The **Executive Secretary** will visit Bermuda in 2018 to meet the new Minister and to pursue the issue of how to engage with the cruise ship industry in Bermuda. **Commissioner Cardigos** relayed that the Azores is exploring the option of extending the Memorandum of Understanding on cruise ships to their side of the Atlantic.

### 2.6 Sea Bed

- The **Executive Secretary** notes that the Secretariat will resume discussion with the Legal Office of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) of a draft Memorandum of Understanding with the ISA.
- **Commissioner Spalding** invited the **Executive Secretary** to a luncheon at Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington, DC, where the ISA Secretary General Mr Michael Lodge will present on deep sea mining and the environment.

### 2.7 Migratory Species

- The Commission engaged the services of Professor Christopher Wold to draft a paper on options for a legal instrument under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) for the European Eel, and worked with Dr Matt Gollock and the Government of Monaco to submit a "Concerted Action" proposal, which was accepted by the CMS COP 12 plenary in the Philippines in October 2017.

- The Secretariat – with Dr Gollock’s support – also hosted a successful side event at CMS COP 12 in Manila with the IUCN Anguillid Eel Specialist Group and the Zoological Society of London. Mr Bradnee Chambers, the CMS Executive Secretary, spoke at the event and reaffirmed the CMS Secretariat’s support.
- A second CMS European Eel Range State meeting is planned for early spring of 2018, possible venues include the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden.
- The Commission was approached by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to facilitate an American eel workshop as a follow-up to the previous workshop in Maine. The Secretariat is currently discussing funding mechanisms for the workshop.

## 2.8 Finance and Fundraising Report

- The Ocean Foundation has received \$175,000 from the Helmsley Charitable Trust for the Sargasso Sea Commission to use as a challenge grant to engage new sponsors and funders. **Commissioner Spalding** agreed to take on a formal fundraising role and update the Commissioners each meeting.
- The Secretariat has engaged the services of a corporate fundraiser in the UK, Ms. Liz Parker, to explore possibilities for corporate sponsorship. She recommended inviting notable supporters to become charity ambassadors for the Sargasso Sea Project, Inc. Feedback from the Commissioners was supportive, but emphasized the role of the ambassadors should focus on generating wider support for the Sargasso Sea.
- The proposal to NASA for a series of two workshops in 2017-2018 related to the COVERAGE project is nearly complete.
- The **Executive Secretary** will continue to explore collaboration with the Aspen Institute’s High Seas Campaign.
- Adam Johnson has completed his campaign #StandUpForSargasso, to raise awareness and funds for the Commission by paddling for 11.5 hours around Bermuda. His campaign raised almost \$2000 for the Sargasso Sea Project Inc. charity, obtained local newspaper coverage in Bermuda, and caught the attention of the Bermuda Tourism Board, the Starboard Paddle Company in Bermuda and the Mission Blue communications’ office.

## 2.9 Mapping and Monitoring

- The British consulate in Boston put the Commission in touch with a not-for-profit called Ocean Mind (which has taken over the Pew-financed project on remote fisheries surveillance). They gave a custom presentation based on AIS data to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will send the OceanMind presentation maps of fishing activity and vessel traffic through the Area of Collaboration to the Commissioners.

## 2.10 Communications

- The Secretariat Marine Research Fellow, **Ms. Tess Mackey**, reported that the Sargasso Sea Commission has surpassed 200 followers on Twitter, and continues to be active on Facebook and LinkedIn. She also gave a demonstration of the Commissioners portal private login on the Sargasso Sea Commission website.
- Ms. Liz Parker authored a LinkedIn article to promote fundraising efforts and raise the organization's profile.
- **Commissioner Cardigos** suggested that the Commission create a pamphlet for outreach. **Ms. Tess Mackey** will coordinate with a graphic designer to develop it.

## 3 Any Other Business

None.

## 4 Date of Next Meeting

- The next SSC meeting call will be the week of 4 December at 8 AM EST, and will be decided upon via Doodle poll.