



MINUTES SSC/2018/17

March 21, 2018

11:00 am EST - Via Zoom Conference Call

Participants:

Dr. Tammy Warren, Commission Acting Chair

Dr. Billy Causey, Commissioner

Mr. Frederico Cardigos, Commissioner

Mr. Mark Spalding, Commissioner

Sen. Wilfred Moore, Commissioner

Dr. David Freestone, Executive Secretary

(Apologies, Prof. Howard Roe and Prof. Stephen de Mora, Commissioners)

1. Revised Minutes of 17 January 2018 Meeting (MOS/SSC/2017/16)

APPROVED.

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

- 2.1 Signatories

- The **Executive Secretary** will renew a request for comments from the Signatory Governments to provide input on the Stewardship Agenda. **Commissioner Spalding** has met with Ole Varmer about outside legal assistance with revisions to the Agenda.

- 2.2 Commission

- **The Executive Secretary** visited Bermuda last month, and met with the new Minister Walton Brown and Permanent Secretary Rozy Azhar. He also paid the annual fee to renew the charity registration.
- Two Commissioners' terms are expiring this year, and they have informed the **Executive Secretary** of their wish to continue in their role. They both will submit CVs by the end of this month, and the **Executive Secretary** will send a note to the Signatories.

- **Commissioner Roe** and the **Executive Secretary** will continue their involvement in the United Nations Second World Ocean Assessment on behalf of the Commission.

2.3 Collaborating Partners

- The **Executive Secretary** noted that there are a total of 30 Collaborating Partners currently, and he will follow up outstanding invitations.
- The Commission discussed other potential Collaborating Partners.

2.4 Fisheries

- Dr Laurie Kell, formerly with the ICCAT Secretariat and now Hon Prof at Imperial College London, is assisting the Commission's ICCAT focus group on an ecosystem-based fisheries management assessment of the Sargasso Sea. He will continue to refine a one-pager to support this approach. Brian Luckhurst and Laurie Kell will present this paper at the ICCAT Ecosystem Sub-Committee in June 2018.
- Ms Tess Mackey represented the Commission at the French-American Workshop on *Sargassum* from 18-19 January at the Texas A&M University at Galveston campus.

2.5 Shipping

- The **Executive Secretary** will continue to engage the new Bermudian minister on the topic of the cruise ship industry in Bermuda.

2.6 Sea Bed

- Dr. Philomene Verlaan represented the Commission as an observer delegation at the first of two International Seabed Authority meetings this year, and would be available also to attend the next meeting in July.

2.7 Migratory Species

- The Second CMS/SSC European Eel Range State meeting is planned for 15-16 May 2018 as a follow-up to the Galway workshop and CMS CoP12. It will be held at the High Court in Malmö, Sweden, in coordination with the World Maritime University and the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species.
- The Commission is finalizing the funding through a grant from DFO Canada and a sole source contract from US-FWS for the American eel Range State Workshop in the Dominican Republic from 4-6 April. The final report from the workshop will be submitted to the CITES Animals Committee prior to their July meeting.

2.8 Finance and Fundraising Report

- The Secretariat staff is meeting with **Commissioner Spalding** next week to discuss fundraising efforts.
- The **Executive Secretary** is exploring connections to Canada's interest in high seas conservation with DFO Staff and **Commissioner Moore** through using the Sargasso Sea as a case study to show leadership in the BBNJ process.

2.9 Mapping and Monitoring

- The Executive Secretary has been invited to join the International Advisory Committee of the NASA COVERAGE project.
- NASA has been able to support the proposal submitted for a series of two workshops in 2017-2018 related to the COVERAGE project. The **Executive Secretary** has submitted an amended proposal for one workshop in late 2018 early 2019, he will follow up with Dr Eric Lindstrom.

2.10 Communications

- The Secretariat Marine Research Fellow, **Ms Tess Mackey**, reported that the Commission's social media presence continues to gain traction. The next edition of the newsletter will be released next month.
- The Commission hired publisher **Scientia** to develop a four-page article about the Sargasso Sea Commission. **Scientia** is conducting final revisions before it is ready for publication.

3 Any Other Business

- **Commissioner Roe** kindly agreed to represent the Commission at the Monaco Blue Initiative in Edinburgh on 8-9 April 2018.
- **Commissioner Warren** will be presenting at the Bermuda Ocean Risk Summit in May during a session on regenerating the ocean.

4 Date of Next Meeting

- The next SSC meeting call will be confirmed via Doodle poll.