



MINUTES SSC/2018/18

June 11, 2018

11:00 am EST - Via Zoom Conference Call

Participants:

Dr Tammy Warren, Commission Acting Chair

Dr Billy Causey, Commissioner

Prof Stephen de Mora, Commissioner

Sen Wilfred Moore, Commissioner

Prof Howard Roe, Commissioner

Dr David Freestone, Executive Secretary

(Apologies, Mr Frederico Cardigos and Mr Mark Spalding, Commissioners)

1. Revised Minutes of 21 March 2018 Meeting (MOS/SSC/2018/17)

APPROVED.

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

- 2.1 Signatories

- On 6 April, the Dominican Republic signed the Hamilton Declaration, and became the tenth Signatory government.
- **Commissioner Spalding** has met with the NOAA legal team about legal assistance with revisions to the draft Stewardship Plan discussed at the 2017 Signatories Meeting in the Azores in 2018.

- 2.2 Commission

- Two Commissioners' terms are eligible for reappointment this year. The **Executive Secretary** has asked the Signatories for their comments, by 15 June.
- **Commissioners Roe and Warren** 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

- **Commissioner Warren** and **Ms Tess Mackey** will both be panelists for the Sea Education Association’s annual Symposium on 15 June at Woods Hole.

2.4 Fisheries

- Dr Laurie Kell, formerly with the ICCAT Secretariat and now Honorary Professor at Imperial College London, is assisting the Commission’s ICCAT focus group in initiating a process for an ecosystem-based fisheries management assessment of the Sargasso Sea using a “Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR)” approach. Dr Kell and Dr Brian Luckhurst presented a paper, entitled “Extending the Indicator-Based Ecosystem Report Card to the Whole Ecosystem; A Preliminary Example Based on the Sargasso Sea” at the ICCAT Ecosystem Sub-Committee from 4-8 June. The paper will be published by ICCAT and posted on the SSC website. The report from the Eco Sub-Committee will be submitted to the full SCRS meeting from 1-5 October 2018.

2.5 Shipping

Nothing to report.

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 will also attend the next meeting from 16-20 July in Kingston Jamaica. Her report was circulated.

2.7 Migratory Species

- The Second CMS/SSC European Eel Range State meeting was held on 15-16 May 2018 in Malmö, Sweden. The Commission Secretariat co-hosted this workshop with the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) as a follow-up to the Galway workshop and CMS CoP12.
 - **Commissioner Roe** attended the meeting, and also gave a presentation on the European Eel and aspects of its life in the North Atlantic.
 - 55 Participants from 23 Range States and 12 international organisations attended and agreed on the potential for international cooperation on the conservation of the European Eel through the CMS, though a mechanism incorporating specific protections for the Sargasso Sea. The Meeting outcome will be reported and CMS and SSC will begin consultations on a follow-up meeting if funding is available.
- The Commission Secretariat coordinated the American Eel Range States Workshop in the Dominican Republic from 4-6 April. The workshop was hosted by the Dominican Ministry of the Environment & Natural Resources,

with financial support from Fisheries & Oceans Canada and the United States Fish & Wildlife Service.

- Representatives from eleven Range States attended, and an additional three Range States shared information on state of stocks and management, as well as enforcement strategies and regulation of trade. The final report from the workshop was submitted to the CITES Animals Committee prior to the July meeting and is on the SSC website.

- **Commissioner Warren** noted that the Bermudian government is reviewing the renewal of the “sister sanctuary” agreement with the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in the United States, first signed in 2012. There has been no follow-up regarding a second such agreement with the Dominican Republic.

2.8 Finance and Fundraising Report

- 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. **Commissioner Warren** and **Commissioner Spalding** also met with Minister LeBlanc during the Ocean Risk Summit in Bermuda last month.

2.9 Mapping and Monitoring

- The **Executive Secretary** has submitted an amended proposal to NASA for one workshop related to the COVERAGE project in late 2018/early 2019, and he is awaiting a response from Dr Eric Lindstrom.

2.10 Communications

- The Secretariat Marine Research Fellow, **Ms Tess Mackey**, reported that the Commission released a special edition of the newsletter for World Oceans Day 2018 which was well received. The social media presence continues to gain traction on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

3 Any Other Business

- **Commissioner Roe** represented the Commission at the Monaco Blue Initiative in Edinburgh on 8-9 April 2018.
- **Commissioner Moore** gave a talk at the Lunenburg School of the Arts on 9 June about the Sargasso Sea in honor of World Oceans Day. A special guest, Danielle Pernette, of the Bluenose Coastal Action Foundation, made a presentation on her research of the American Eel.
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4 Date of Next Meeting

- The next SSC meeting call has been tentatively scheduled for **August 9 at 10 AM EST**, and will be confirmed with the Commissioners via email.