



MINUTES SSC/2019/26
September 25, 2019
12:00 PM EDT - Via Zoom Conference Call

Participants:

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

1. Minutes of 8 May 2019 Meeting (MOS/SSC/2019/24)
 - Approved. Minutes of MOS/SSC/2019/25 kept internal due to discussions of GEF and FFEM proposals.

2. **Executive Secretary** presented an update of Work Programme implementation to-date:
 - 1.1. Signatories
 - **Bahamas Meeting 29-30 August** was a generally regarded as a success. After some unavoidable delay the report of this meeting has been completed and was distributed to participants for comments on September 13th. No comments have been received to date.

 - 1.2. Commission
 - Two Commissioner's terms are eligible for reappointment this year. The SSC Secretariat has sent the feedback from Signatory governments and Collaborating Partners to the Bermuda Permanent Secretary for the Ministers' review prior to making appointment decisions. The process has been delayed due to major storms in Bermuda, but the **Executive Secretary** will follow up with the PS.
 - The draft chapter for the 2nd UN World Ocean Assessment has been submitted to the editors for review, well ahead of schedule. The

Commission thanks Professor Roe and the other authors for their work on this.

1.3. Secretariat

- Nothing to report.

1.4. Collaborating Partners

- Since the meeting in The Bahamas, several new Collaborating Partners have formally joined, including the Florida Atlantic University (Harbor Branch), the Global Oceans Project, Global Fishing Watch, and the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences. The **Executive Secretary** is exploring MoUs with the International Seabed Authority, OSPAR, BirdLife International, and ICCAT. There is a new page on the Commission website to highlight Programmatic Partners, including ATLAS, COVERAGE, MiCO, and I-Atlantic.

1.5. Fisheries

- Dr Laurie Kell and Brian Luckhurst have agreed to conduct an ecosystem-based fisheries management assessment of the Sargasso Sea using a “Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR)” approach. Dr Kell and Dr 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 in June 2018. Dr Luckhurst will be attending the upcoming SCRS meeting in Madrid.

1.6. Sea Bed

- John Vermilye and Luc Cuyvers from the Gallifrey Foundation, as well as Sarah DeLand from the Duke Geospatial Ecology Lab, represented the Commission as our observer delegation at the ISA meeting from 25 February to 1 March at the ISA Headquarters in Jamaica.

1.7. Migratory Species

- The Secretariat hosted the Third Range States Meeting for the European Eel with CMS and the World Maritime Institute in Malmo, Sweden from 25-26 June 2019. Twenty Four Range States, as well as relevant NGOs and international organizations, attended the meeting. Rather than a legally binding agreement, many Range States were in favour of developing a Single Species Action Plan for the species. The CMS and SSC Secretariats will work with the Government of the Principality of Monaco to bring a document charting the possible way forward to CMS COP13, in February 2020.

1.8. Finance and Fundraising Report

- The Commission is grateful to the Curtis & Edith Munson Foundation for their continued support at the meeting in The Bahamas and also for their new grant of \$50,000 over the next two years; of which \$25,000 has been received.
- The William H. Donner Foundation gave the Commission a grant for \$100,000 for general support in October 2018, and the Secretariat has just submitted the report on the use of these grant funds together with a request for further funding.
- Dr David Vousden had been commissioned to develop a Project Proposal for the Global Environment Facility, which was reviewed by the GEF International Waters team in November 2018 and found eligible for GEF support. This concept note is currently being revised based on discussions at the meeting in the Bahamas.
- Thanks to support from the French biodiversity agency, the French Global Environment Fund (FFEM) is considering a joint proposal from the Sargasso Sea Commission and the Costa Rica Thermal Dome project, alongside the Ocean University in Brest. The **Executive Secretary** has circulated the final proposal to the Commission and Signatories.
- The **Executive Secretary** will be speaking at an event sponsored by the Japanese MFA in Tokyo in late October and also attending an event sponsored by the Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in Tokyo and will discuss the possibility of funding with them.
- **Commissioners Cardigos** and **de Mora** offered to contact the Oceano Azul Foundation and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation (respectively) about the potential for cofinancing.

1.9. Mapping and Monitoring

- The SSC Secretariat is in the process of submitting priority areas and guidance for mapping and ROV operations in the North Atlantic for the next two field seasons of the NOAA ship the Okeanos Explorer. Commissioner Roe already collaborated with I-Atlantic on their proposal, which will be circulated to the Commissioners.

1.10 Communications

- The Secretariat Programme Manager, **Ms Tess Mackey**, reported that there will be an upcoming edition of the newsletter released soon, once the official photos from The Bahamas have been received. Social media over the summer was able to generate a lot of content from the Greenpeace expedition in Bermuda.

3. Any Other Business

4. Date of Next Meeting

- The next SSC meeting will be held the week of 11 November and confirmed via Doodle poll.