



MINUTES SSC/2019/28
December 18, 2019
10:00 AM EST - 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
Mr Mark Spalding, Commissioner
Dr David Freestone, Executive Secretary
(Apologies, Prof Howard Roe, Commissioner)

1. Minutes of 14 November 2019 Meeting (MOS/SSC/2019/27)
 - Approved.

2. **Executive Secretary** presented an update of Work Programme implementation to-date:
 - 1.1. Signatories
 - The Secretariat is following up with The Bahamas about appointing an official focal point following the retirement of Philip Weech.

 - 1.2. Commission
 - Two Commissioner's terms are eligible for reappointment this year. On September 15th the Executive Secretary sent the feedback from Signatory governments to the Bermuda Permanent Secretary for review by the minister prior to Cabinet making the appointment decision. The process has been delayed because of pressure of Cabinet business, but the **Executive Secretary** is continuing to follow up with the PS.
 - The draft chapter for the 2nd UN World Ocean Assessment has been submitted to the editors for review. The Commission thanked **Commissioner Roe** for taking the lead on this and his writing team – including **Commissioner Warren**, Laurie Kell, Brian Luckhurst and DF - for all their work on this draft.

- 1.3. Secretariat
 - Nothing to report.
- 1.4. Collaborating Partners
 - The Commission now has 29 Collaborating Partners and is exploring MoUs with the International Seabed Authority and ICCAT.
 - **Commissioners de Mora** and **Cardigos** will follow up with Plymouth Marine Lab and the University of the Azores, respectively.
- 1.5. Fisheries
 - **Commissioner Warren** attended the ICCAT Commission meeting in Madrid last month and reported that there were no objections to the Ecosystem Subcommittee's recommendations regarding using the Sargasso Sea as a pilot site for the development of ecosystem based fishery management indicators which was proposed in the report of the SCRS Ecosystem Subcommittee. She recommended that the **Executive Secretary** should look into observer status with ICCAT in the discussions of the MoU, and will send some examples of approved MoUs. The Secretariat will also follow up with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention to compare MoU texts.
- 1.6. Sea Bed
 - The wording of a draft MoU between the Secretariats of the International Seabed Authority and the SSC has been finalized. The technical co-ordinates annexed to the MOU were refined by Duke MGEL. The **Secretariat** will circulate the final draft MoU to the Commission.
 - The **Executive Secretary** will follow up with the Gallifrey Foundation about representing us at ISA meetings as our observer delegation.
- 1.7. Migratory Species
 - The CMS and SSC Secretariats have drafted a proposal for a Single Species Action Plan, which the Principality of Monaco will present to CMS COP13 in Gandhinagar, India, from 15-22 February 2020. The SSC will aim to support the development of this Single Species Action plan if it is approved.
- 1.8. Finance and Fundraising Report
 - The Commission is grateful to the Curtis & Edith Munson Foundation for agreeing to move the date of their 2020 grant of \$25,000 to January.
 - Fisheries & Oceans Canada approached the Secretariat about a contribution agreement to provide operational funding to the Secretariat this fiscal year ending March 2020, with a renewal next year. The Secretariat will circulate the draft contribution agreement to the Commission.

- The Principality of Monaco has contacted the Commission Secretariat regarding a voluntary contribution, as they have generously done in previous years.
- Thanks to support from the French biodiversity agency (AGF), the French **Global Environment Facility (FFEM)** is currently considering a joint proposal from the Sargasso Sea Commission and the Costa Rica Thermal Dome project, with the Ocean University in Brest, for a 3 million Euro grant over 5 years. The final proposal received a favourable review from the Scientific and Technical Committee in October and the FFEM Steering Committee on November 25th. The next step is an evaluation mission in early 2020.
- It is expected that a Programmatic Proposal will be submitted by FAO to the June GEF Council Meeting, which can include Child Project Proposals. Dr David Vousden has revised the proposal, which was circulated for a further round of comments before the holidays.
 - **Commissioners Cardigos** and **de Mora** agreed to follow up with the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and Oceano Azul about the potential for cofinancing.

1.9. Mapping and Monitoring

- Nothing to report.

1.10 Communications

- The Secretariat Programme Manager, **Ms Tess Mackey**, reported that the October 2019 newsletter had almost a 60% open rate, and all other social media outlets are doing well. The holiday newsletter will be released this week.

3. Any Other Business

4. Date of Next Meeting

- The first SSC meeting of 2020 will be confirmed via Doodle poll after the holidays.