



MINUTES SSC/2020/34
September 23, 2020
11:00 AM EDT - Via Zoom Conference Call

Participants:

Dr Tammy Warren, Commission Acting Chair
Mr Frederico Cardigos, Commissioner
Prof Stephen de Mora, Commissioner
Sen Wilfred Moore, Commissioner
Prof Howard Roe, Commissioner
Mr Mark Spalding, Commissioner
Dr Billy Causey, Emeritus Commissioner
Dr David Freestone, Executive Secretary
Ms Teresa Mackey, SSC Secretariat
(Apologies, Mrs Rochelle Newbold, Commissioner)

1. Minutes of 18 June 2020 Meeting (SSC/2020/33)
 - Approved.

2. **Executive Secretary** presented an update of Work Programme implementation to-date:
 - 1.1. Signatories
 - The second virtual Signatories call was held on July 29. The USA suggested that the Signatories convene an internal working group to review their rules of procedure. The USA, UK, Canada, Bahamas, and the Azores agreed to collaborate on a first draft which will be shared with the Commission for comment.

 - 1.2. Commission
 - **Commissioners Warren, Moore, and Cardigos'** terms are expiring this year and all were eligible for re-appointment. Warren and Cardigos were re-nominated by their respective governments and Moore received the support of Canada after he self-nominated. In early July, the Executive Secretary

circulated the nomination papers to the Signatories and Collaborating Partners for comments by 30 September as agreed. However, PS Azhar has flagged the point that an election will be held in Bermuda on 1 October. To avoid delay, PS Azhar requested that she be able to send the proposals for appointment to Bermuda Cabinet by the 17 September to ensure the decision could be taken before the October 1 election. The Signatories agreed to bring the closing date for comments forward to 15 September. PS Azhar then sent the paper to Cabinet on 17th as agreed, for their final decision.

1.3. Secretariat

- Nothing to report.

1.4. Collaborating Partners

- The Atlantic International Research (AIR) requested to become a Collaborating Partner, and Commissioners agreed that the Secretariat should send an official invitation. **Commissioner Cardigos** also recommended following up with the University of the Azores on the previously sent invitation.
- The Secretariat revised the Hope Spot Champion Agreement, and sent it to Mission Blue. The Secretariat is continuing negotiations with Mission Blue, and agreed to share the draft with the Commissioners for their information.

1.5. Fisheries

- **The Executive Secretary** has been in contact with the Secretariat of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and has drafted an MOU which is currently being considered by the Parties but no response as yet. He will follow up with their Executive Secretary.
- Currently due to COVID-19 concerns, the ICCAT SCRS and Commission meetings initially scheduled for this fall are canceled.
- WECAFC is hosting a virtual Second Preparatory meeting for the development of a regional fisheries management entity/arrangement on October 23, which the Secretariat will be participating in.

1.6 Shipping

- Nothing noted.

1.6. Sea Bed

- The ISA is conducting stakeholder consultations on the draft standards and guidelines to support the implementation of the Draft Regulations for Exploitation of mineral resources in the Area. **Kristina Gjerde** is writing comments on behalf of IUCN, and suggested that the Commission and IUCN

submit jointly. The Commissioners agreed, and so the Secretariat will notify the Signatory governments prior to the October 20th deadline.

1.7. Migratory Species

- The SSC has supported the development of a “zero draft” of the European Eel Single Species Action plan (that was authorised by the CMS COP in February 2020). It has been circulated to the Range States for comment. The Secretariat is working with the CMS Secretariat to plan a series of virtual meetings with regional groups to discuss the zero draft action plan. The Secretariat will follow up with the CMS Secretariat about comments on the zero draft.

1.8. Finance and Fundraising Report

- The contribution agreement with the Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada to provide \$118K CAD of operational funding to the Secretariat this fiscal year ended in March 2020. The Secretariat is in advanced discussions with DFO staff about a renewal.
- The Secretariat has been working on the appraisal stage of the FFEM proposal with the FFEM consultants, who will be assisting with writing the final project document. The document is in its final stages prior to approval by the Steering Committee, and the Secretariat expects it will be ready in September 2020, with contracts to be signed thereafter. The FFEM grant will be administered by SSPI, Inc. (the nonprofit arm of the Secretariat) and, subject to negotiations on overhead, passed to IUCN for implementation as usual.
- The “Common Oceans” Programmatic Proposal for ABNJ was approved by the GEF Secretariat during their GEF Council Meeting from 2-3 June. This included a \$3m allocation to the Sargasso Sea. UNDP has appointed the International Oceanographic Commission (IOC) as the Executing Agency for the Sargasso Sea Project and IOC will receive a \$100k Project Preparation Grant (PPG) from GEF. This PPG will allow the IOC to hire consultants to prepare the final project document to be sent for GEF CEO approval within 12 months from the time of GEF Council approval. The Secretariat had a call with IOC 22 September to discuss this process.

1.9. Mapping and Monitoring

- Nothing noted.

1.10. Communications

- The Secretariat Programme Manager, **Ms Tess Mackey**, encouraged Commissioners to submit photos and blurbs of recent happenings to the newsletter. The next edition will be released in October.
- The Odyssey Connect “Hackathon” (now renamed Momentum) has been moved to a fully virtual format, and will be held 13-15 November, with a number of preparatory meetings first.

3. Any Other Business

- The Commission and Secretariat expressed their sadness at the untimely death of Biliانا Cecin-Sain. The Commissioners remembered particularly her unswerving advocacy and support for ocean and coastal management, in particular the establishment of marine protected areas; her unceasing efforts to raise the profile of the ocean and marine issues in international affairs – particularly the UN - through the ground breaking work of the Global Ocean Forum; and of course the outstanding work she did establishing regular Ocean Days at major meetings – notably the UNFCCC.

4. Date of Next Meeting

- As agreed on the call, the next SSC meeting will be held **18 November at 11 AM EST.**