



MINUTES SSC/2015/3

16 June 2015

10:30 am eastern- Via Skype

Participants:

Prof. Howard Roe, Chair
Dr. Tammy Trott, Commissioner
Prof. Dire Tladi, Commissioner
Dr. Billy Causey, Commissioner
Dr. David Freestone, Executive Secretary
[Prof. Ricardo Santos was not present]

1. Minutes of April 23 Meeting SSC/2015/2
 - Approved minutes and matters arising in last call.

2. Dr. David Freestone presented an update of Work Programme implementation to-date:
 - 2.1. Commission Issues
 - DF reported on the Commissioner selection process for 2015. Two well-qualified candidates were nominated. Once the new Bermuda Permanent Secretary (PS) is in place (end of June), DF will brief the PS and the Cabinet Secretary on the selection process, in order for the Bermuda Government to make an appointment.
 - DF reported that the Bermuda Company limited by Guarantee had been granted Bermuda Charitable status in April 2015, but is only valid for one year. Commission Secretariat is planning to visit Bermuda to meet the PS during the summer.
 - DF noted the possibility of convening a second joint Signatories/Commissioner meeting in Spring 2016.

 - 2.2. Signatories
 - BVI is ready to sign the Hamilton Declaration.
 - Bahamas has a cabinet decision to sign.
 - DF suggested that Puerto Rico, Sweden and the Netherlands might consider being Collaborating Partners if they cannot sign the Declaration.
 - UK FCO is following up with TCI and Anguilla – UK OTs.

2.3. Collaborating Partners

- No additions have been made.
- Secretariat has applied to the International Seabed Authority for official Observer status for the Commission.
- ICPC meeting next month will address issue of Partnership.
- Possible NAFO, WECAFC, and IOCARIBE arrangements are being explored.
- BC gave update on the US IOCARIBE presentation on the Sargasso Sea by Bonnie Ponwith. There is considerable concern within IOCARIBE member states over *Sargassum* on their beaches and a desire to connect as partners at some level.
- There is also considerable interest in *Sargassum* in Brazil, where DF was able to link researchers with US researchers to work on species identification.
- BC and TT gave updates on the Sea Education Association (SEA) Seminar; they noted the great research and enthusiasm for their Sargasso Sea work.

2.4. Fisheries

- Update on ICCAT SCRS ecosystems subcommittee in June.
- Funding permitting it is proposed to send BL, TT and HR to SCRS in Madrid in September and ICCAT Commission in November in Malta.

2.5. Shipping

- Secretariat will reengage on Bermuda MOU with cruise lines once PS is appointed.
- Updated report on shipping risks continues; follow up needed for details of MARPOL.

2.6. Convention on Migratory Species

- European eel range state workshop is proposed for 2016.
- American eel workshop is in planning stages as well for October 2015.
- For both of these workshops, it is important to involve eel experts.

2.7 Finance Report

- Financial situation was noted.
- The 2014 draft audit report just received and follow up is ongoing.

2.8 Mapping and Monitoring

- NASA Mapping project is proceeding with the identification of vector input data; in this connection, useful contact has been made with the Duke University Marine Geospatial Ecology Lab (an established Collaborating Partner) where researchers may have significant data assembled that NASA may be able to use.
- BC noted that the NOAA Florida Keys office may have appropriate facilities to host a NASA data workshop and commission meeting in Jan. 2016

2.9 Communications

- FB noted the new website launch of June 19 and requested review of the prototype by the Commissioners.
- DF mentioned the Paris release of the Pendleton report at UNESCO's World Ocean Day (Pendleton, L., F. Krowicki., P. Strosser, and J. Hallett-Murdoch. (2014) *Assessing the Economic Contribution of Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Services in the Sargasso Sea*. NI R 14-05. Durham, NC: Duke University)
- BC offered to send copies of his recent Sargasso Sea power-point presentation to Commission Secretariat for archive.

3. Next Meeting

- It was agreed that the next meeting would be 29 June at 1:00 pm EST.

4. No other business