



**MINUTES SSC/2022/45**

**July 19, 2022**

**10:00 AM ET - Via Zoom Conference Call**

**Participants:**

**Prof Stephen de Mora, Commissioner**

**Sen Wilfred Moore, Commissioner**

**Mr Mark Spalding, Commissioner**

**Dr Howard Roe, Commissioner**

**Mrs. Rochelle Newbold, Commissioner**

**Dr. Ana Colaço, Commissioner**

**Dr David Freestone, Executive Secretary**

**Fae Sapsford, SSC Secretariat**

**Apologies: Dr Tammy Warren, Commission Acting Chair**

**1. Minutes of SSC/2022/44**

- **Approved.**

**2. Signatories update**

- **Commissioner Spalding** re-capped progress on the Signatories proposed revisions of their rules of procedure, and explained that he had created a new draft based on the original 2014 rules of procedure, rather than the Signatories update. This draft would be intended to be shared in advance of the planned joint meeting, with an explanatory note. He asked for comments on this proposal from the Commissioners by the end of July. The **Executive Secretary** suggested that it would be extremely helpful for all parties if the proposal was accompanied by an explanatory memorandum.
- The **Executive Secretary** updated the Commissioners on the GEF project – it had received approval from the GEF CEO, the Chief Technical Officer (CTO) advertisement had been posted by IOC/UNESCO, and he now hoped to hold the inception workshop for the project in late September/early October. This

meeting could coincide with the FFEM steering committee and the proposed joint meeting of Commissioners and Signatories to make the best use of the budget available.

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

1.1. Commissioner appointment process

- The **Executive Secretary** noted that the terms for **Commissioner Roe** and **Commissioner Newbold** were coming to an end. Prof Roe has served three terms and was not eligible for reappointment under the current rules; Mrs. Newbold was eligible for reappointment. **Commissioner Newbold** (endorsed by the Bahamas), Professors Murray Roberts, and David Johnson (both self-nominated) had submitted their materials for consideration. Their materials had been sent to partners for comments, and after the period for comment finishes on July 30<sup>th</sup>, the **Executive Secretary** will advise the Bermuda Minister of the outcomes and he will submit a proposal to Cabinet for a decision.

1.2. Collaborating partners

- Nothing noted

1.3. Fisheries

- The **Executive Secretary** reported that Drs Brian Luckhurst and Laurie Kell had attended, with DEFRA approval and support, the ICCAT ecosystem sub-committee. They proposed the possibility of an MOU between the ICCAT and SSC Secretariats. The idea was approved by the ecosystem sub-committee, and it would proceed to the SCRS in September, so the Secretariat was looking in to templates of previous MOUs in order to begin drafting.
- The **Executive Secretary** reported that an MOU draft had been approved by NAFO, but that there were a few comments from NAFO Parties that the NAFO Executive Secretary (Fred Kingston) would report after the Parties next meeting in September.

1.4. Shipping

- The **Executive Secretary** noted that he had raised with Professor Ronan Long of the Global Ocean Institute of the IMO World Maritime University the possibility of hosting a meeting focusing on High Seas PSSAs, presenting SSC as a case study. Prof Long was enthusiastic, but it may not be possible until early 2023.

1.5. Seabed

- The **Executive Secretary** reported that the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) had submitted its comments on the International Seabed Authority (ISA) Regional Environmental Management Plan for the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. It is not public domain.
- Commissioner Spalding reported that his team at The Ocean Foundation had been highlighting the risks faced by investors in the Metals Company (previously Deep Green), the leading seabed mining company, and some 85% of their investors had left.

#### 1.6. Migratory species

- The **Executive Secretary** reported that an MOU between the SSC and Inter-American Turtle Convention (IAC) Secretariats had been approved at their COP. The next step was to schedule a date for a virtual signing event.
- The **Executive Secretary** reported that he was trying to re-establish relations with CMS.

#### 1.7. Finance

- **Commissioner Spalding** reported that he had not yet been successful in finding a funder for the joint Commission/Signatories meeting.
- The **Executive Secretary** reported that he was in the process of drafting a letter that the Signatories could use to approach their governments in pursuit of funding for the Secretariat.
- The **Executive Secretary** reported that on July 12<sup>th</sup>, SSPI had received some \$89,000 as the first disbursement from the FFEM project. This was slightly less than expected because of the recent fall of the Euro against the USD.
- The **Executive Secretary** reported that the GEF project was in process. The closing date for the CTO position was end of July, and once the CTO was appointed the next step would be inception workshop.
- The **Executive Secretary** mentioned that Nick Lambert Associates International (NLAI), who had previously prepared a Big Data report for the Commission, had agreed with to assist the development of the report into a peer-reviewed academic paper. He would also be applying for another grant from IUCN for follow on work related to the big data report and academic paper.

#### 1.7 Mapping and Monitoring

- Nothing noted.

## 1.8 Communications

- **Fae Sapsford** gave a communications update:
  - Many social media posts were made surrounding the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC) which were well received. **FS** explained that the Secretariat wrote a speech for the Deputy Premier of Bermuda, Minister Walter Roban, to give as a call to action at UNOC asking other governments to become signatories to the Hamilton Declaration. This speech was given at a SARGADOM side event at UNOC with various partners in attendance, and filmed. A recording of the speech was posted on the SARGADOM YouTube channel.
  - The **Executive Secretary**, Howard Roe, and **FS** had published a paper in Frontiers of Marine Science about the Sargasso Sea EBSA.
  - **FS** had written two articles for NOAA about high seas governance for their 'Voyage to the Ridge' expedition, which would be published on NOAA's website.
  - There is some funding under the Common Oceans Program coordination project for media generation for the child projects and a proposal for Sargasso Sea related imagery was in the works with Sargasso Sea Commission Ambassador JP Rouja.

## 3. Any Other Business/Date of Next Meeting

- The Commissioners agreed that their next meeting would be scheduled for **September 21<sup>st</sup> at 11am ET.**