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SIOFA Scientific Committee tasks from the SIOFA Performance Review 2023

The SIOFA Secretariat

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| **Abstract** | |
| This paper presents a summary of the recommendations proposed by the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2023 and adopted at the 10th SIOFA MoP Annual Meeting, for further consideration by the SIOFA Scientific Committee in plenary session. | |

SIOFA Scientific Committee tasks from the SIOFA Performance Review 2023

## Introduction

This paper provides a schematic summary of the recommendations proposed by the SIOFA Performance Review Panel in 2023, along with the recommendations by the MoP that were included in Annex G of the [MoP10 report](https://siofa.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/SIOFA-MoP10-Report.pdf).

In the following table, the SIOFA Performance Review Panel recommendations are listed, with recommendations relevant to the SC highlighted in yellow. The ‘comments’ column provides a summary of new information that has become available since the consideration of the Performance Review Panels report by MoP10.

| **№** | **Performance Review Recommendation** | **MoP Decision** | **MoP**  **Priority** | **Implementing Party(ies) / Body(ies)** | **Proposed Timeline** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | As a general procedural consideration, the Panel recommends that SIOFA CCPs agree on a clear process for the follow-up of this Performance Review Including the following elements:  1. A formal decision on which Recommendations are accepted;  2. a plan for implementation with time targets;  3. a regular, periodical review of implementation of such accepted Recommendations;  4. a renewal of the Performance Review process within an appropriate time frame, which we would recommend could be 5  years from now, given the fact this Review is the first such process carried out by the organisation. | MoP will review the implementation of the 1st SIOFA performance review at MoP12. |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | The Panel recommends that the SIOFA SC is tasked with conferring high priority to the improvement of stock assessments in order to reduce uncertainty as a necessary basis for the adoption of harvest strategies. This task should be subject to a target timeline and include a process for an independent peer review of assessment methods and results. | MoP endorses recommendation 1 as commented by the SC in particular difficulties of improving SA and reducing uncertainty | H | SC | Ongoing, ref timeline recommended |  |
| 2 | The Panel recommends that SIOFA CCPs task the Scientific Committee with assessing the status of key shark stocks in the Area and that their status be kept under constant review over the coming years. | MoP supports this recommendation; work is already ongoing. Key shark stocks for assessment to be defined by SC. | H | SC | ongoing |  |
| 3 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs ensure that the fisheries summaries developed by the Scientific Committee contain clear information on the stock status of species caught in the SIOFA Area, and that this information is promptly made available to the general public. | MoP endorses this recommendation, work is ongoing | M/L | SC / Secretariat | 3 - 5 years |  |
| 4 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs assess the use of the VME Guide by observers and take action to ensure its use as required, and also implement awareness programmes targeting observers. | MoP endorses this recommendation | M | SC Secretariat for publication CCPs for implementation | 3 – 5 years |  |
| 5 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs finalise the protocol on VME and protected area designation and speed up the process of progressing the agreed protected areas from their interim nature and identify any further areas in need for protection. | MoP endorses this recommendation | H/M | SC MoP | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 6 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider capacity building activities for developing States to undertake BFIAs as per the SIOFA standards. | MoP endorses this recommendation | H/M H on data capacity building | SC / Secretariat | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 7 | The Panel recommends either the deadlines for data submission under relevant CMMs or the schedule of the annual meeting of the Scientific Committee be revised to ensure the SC has the most recent data available ahead of its annual meeting. | MoP agrees with the concerns expressed by SC. MoP does not endorse this recommendation  The MoP would however consider mechanisms to enable CCPs to provide data on a more frequent basis. |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs task the Scientific Committee to develop a long-term strategic plan with identified priorities for its work and options for the use of independent consultants, academic institutions, private/public organisations and/or CCP expertise resources as feasible, taking into account funding requirements. | MoP encourages SC to develop a long-term strategic plan.  Topic will also be addressed at MoP10 under agenda item XX | M | SC | 3 years |  |
| 9 | The Panel recommends CCPs to launch an exercise of consolidation of the various CMMs into a corpus of SIOFA rules and regulations, with the aim of codifying the applicable rules to make them clearer, easier to interpret and easier to control in terms of compliance. This exercise should identify existing gaps and possible contradictions, issues of interpretation in need of resolving, and a future structure of the corpus that allows the different actors on whom the various obligations fall (from SIOFA´s own bodies, to CCP authorities, to fishers) to have a clear and user-friendly access to their applicable rules and discipline. | MoP does not endorse the recommendation to consolidate the various CMM into a corpus of SIOFA measures. The MoP noted that the CC is continuously revising the CMM.   MoP adopts the renaming convention of the CMM. | M | CC / Secretariat | Ongoing  Oct 2023 for CMMs renaming | A change to the CMM naming convention was adopted at MoP10, and this was implemented by the Secretariat in October 2023 |
| 10 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs undertake the development of a framework for the provision of Scientific Advice that takes into account best international practices, whether or not combined with a framework for decision-making at managerial level in accordance with the Precautionary Approach. This could accompany or complement the already decided work line dedicated to the development of harvest strategies but would provide the basis for an urgent consideration of precautionary measures in the short term. | MoP endorsed recommendation 10 | M | SC | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 11 | The Panel recommends SIOFA discusses with CCAMLR concrete options to co-manage toothfish stocks shared between the 2 organisations, and establishes either a prohibition of fishing for this resource outside established toothfish management units or revised the units as required so no activities escape the conservation measures established for this resource. | MoP endorsed recommendation 11 | H | MoP | Ongoing |  |
| 13 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs adopt precautionary measures for target stocks other than the three key stocks of toothfish, orange roughy and alfonsino. | MoP endorsed recommendation 13 | H/M | SC / MoP | Ongoing |  |
| 15 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs agree on a definition of new fisheries and discuss a regulatory framework for new and exploratory fisheries incorporating the highest standards derived from international best practices. The framework should make proper use of tools already developed by SIOFA such as the fishing footprint, BFIAs and VME mapping. | MoP endorses recommendation 15  Work in ongoing | H/M | SC and MoP | 1 - 3 years |  |
| -- | Recommendations nr 10, 12 and 13, above on the implementation of the Precautionary approach apply also for the purposes of the issues assessed under this criterion. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs to make every effort to progress from the current interim arrangements for bottom fishing to permanent rules, retaking discussions on this issue from the proposal tabled in 2019 or an updated version of it. Recommendation nr 9 above, on a corpus of SIOFA rules, applies also for the purposes of the issues at stake here. | MoP endorses recommendation 16  Work in ongoing | H | SC and MoP | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 17 | The Panel recommends the MoP requests from the SC an evaluation of the frequency of VME encounters and of the compliance of fishing vessels with the reporting and move-on rule requirements. | MoP endorses recommendation 17 | H | CC and SC | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 18 | The Panel recommends that SIOFA CCPs expand their consideration of actions aiming at the conservation of biodiversity to fishing activities other than those using bottom gears, extending the concept of Impact Assessment to such activities as well. | MoP endorses recommendation 18 | M | SC | 3 - 5 years |  |
| 19 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs to agree urgently on measures to reduce shark by-catches, in particular by implementing any mitigation measures that identified as effective by the 2023 specific workshop on sharks to take place under the aegis of the Scientific Committee, including precautionary catch limits for Portuguese dogfish. Recommendation nr 2 on the assessment of the status of shark stocks is also relevant for the issues discussed under this criterion. | MoP endorses recommendation 19 | H | SC and MoP | 1 - 3 years (work ongoing) |  |
| 20 | The Panel recommends the SC effectively use the focused agenda item on seabird by-catch, decided by SC 8 in 2023 for future sessions, to identify necessary by-catch mitigation measures, including in trawl fisheries, as originally proposed at the time CMM 13 was adopted. SIOFA´s cooperation arrangements with ACAP, but also with CCAMLR, should be strengthened including for the purposes of this work. | MoP endorses recommendation 20 | M | SC and MoP | 3 - 5 years |  |
| 21 | The Panel recommends SIOFA carries out a review of the effect of effort limits applicable to relevant fleets to determine whether such limits constrain the fishing activity or not, and that a clear determination is made on the potential use of capacity or effort limits as a fishery management tool, especially with regard to fisheries conducted with gears other than bottom gears. | MoP endorses recommendation 21 | M | SC and MoP | 3 - 5 years |  |
| 22 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider incorporating the principles of a flag State performance self-assessment into their compliance monitoring scheme, including by tasking the CC with reviewing the annual national reports submitted by CCPs and currently reviewed only by the SC. | MoP endorses the recommendation and notes the comments of the CC and the SC that such assessments are already performed. | M | SC CC MoP | 1 - 5 years (and ongoing) |  |
| 24 | The Panel recommends SIOFA adopts at least a minimum standard regarding inspection coverage of all fishing vessels carrying or landing resources of its competence which enter their ports. | MoP agrees to consider minimum standards for PI coverage and noted the recommendations from the CC | M | CC and MoP | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 26 | The Panel recommends and encourages SIOFA CCPs to continue their efforts to agree on a SIOFA VMS in order to verify vessels activity in the Agreement Area. The Panel also recommends that CCPs adopt rules for the submission VMS data until such scheme is adopted. | MoP endorses the recommendation, noting the statements of some CCPs that the rule of submission of VMS data, should only be considered if and when a SIOFA VMS is agreed upon | H | CC and MoP | 1 - 3 years (ongoing) |  |
| 27 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs urgently seek to clarify the various issues of interpretation affecting the implementation of several MCS measures, in particular those related to CMM 06 on the IUU vessel list, CMM 07 on Vessel authorisation and CMM 14 on the HSBI procedures, including by seeking independent legal or technical advice if necessary. | MoP endorses the recommendation, and notes that there may not be a need to seek independent legal or tech advice | M | SC  CC  MoP | Ongoing (3 – 5 years) |  |
| 31 | The Panel recommends that SIOFA CCPs task the Secretariat to assess the capacity building needed in order to improve implementation of their obligations by the CCPs, prioritizing the most urgent and providing options to ensure appropriate assistance is provided to CCPs which so require. | MoP endorses this recommendation. And notes that capacity building was already discussed | H | Secretariat CC SC MoP | 1 – 3 years |  |
| 32 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs discuss the possible adoption of a new measure on a Catch Documentation Scheme, focusing, in particular, on CCAMLR´s DCD, and explore options for its implementation. The Panel recommends SIOFA strengthens its cooperation with CCAMLR in this regard, including by requesting capacity building support for the Secretariat so that it can contribute to future joint work by the two organisations. | MoP agrees with the recommendation made by the CC, and noted that it is therefore not necessary to establish a SIOFA CDS for toothfish, rather, it is adequate to continue its ongoing cooperation with CCAMLR | H | SC, CC and MoP | ongoing |  |
| 33 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider the option of developing a SIOFA Reporting Manual to replace the present table of reporting requirements provided for in the organisation´s website. Suggestions as to the structure and contents have been provided in our assessment under this criterion. | MoP endorses the recommendation | M | Secretariat, CC, SC | 3 years | Project SEC2022‐OBS1 and the observer harmonisation workshop (WS2024‐OBS) have made recommendations for the consideration by SC9 on observer manuals and data reporting systems. |
| 34 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider the option of establishing an IT-based data management platform taking into account the experience gained in the design and use of such platforms in other organisations, including in-built protocols for data verification, quality checks and the protection of confidential data. A decision to explore this option should only be taken if CCPs accept and assume the need for investment on capacity building as required. | MoP endorses the recommendation. And request the Secretariat to prepare a paper describing implementation possibilities (to SC and MoP) | H | Secretariat, SC, CC | 1 - 3 years | The Secretariat has an in-house IT-based platform for managing data, datasets (metadata), and the fisheries (C&E, observer, vessels) databases.  The Secretariat notes that this was not designed to have an interface or link from outside of the Secretariat, and changes would be required for this to be implemented. The Secretariat currently has data check procedures, but these will need further development to expand the range of checking already in place. |
| 35 | The Panel recommends, in case SIOFA CCPs are not prepared to implement an IT data platform as per Recommendation nr 34, urgent action is taken to ensure appropriate data verification protocols and quality checks are established. | The MoP notes the comments of the SC, and that the work is on-going | - |  | ongoing | The Secretariat notes that it currently has data check procedures and currently does report issues to CCPs, but these processes will need further development to expand the range of checking already in place. |
| 37 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider strengthening the use of intersessional decision procedures or inter-sessional working groups to facilitate the work of SIOFA as appropriate, in order to focus MoP discussions and make better use of the time available. | MoP endorses the recommendation, and notes that Inter-sessional decision process should be used only when exceptional | M / L | MoP | 1-5 years |  |
| 39 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs continue to review, clarify and amend as appropriate the relevant data rules or provisions so that all CCPs as well as observers and the general public have better access to data and information for the purpose of discussion and decision-making. | MoP endorses this recommendation, and notes that this work is ongoing | M | SC, CC and MoP | ongoing |  |
| 40 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs task the Secretariat to review the documents and materials on the SIOFA website and make necessary tunings in accordance with any new data rules on dissemination and any relevant decisions of the MoP. | MoP supports the recommendation | M | Secretariat | ongoing | The Secretariat notes that the titles and abstracts of all SC restricted access documents have been made public on its website. In addition, versions of SC project reports (where appropriate) have also been made available publicly on its website. |
| 42 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider strengthening cooperation with the IOTC, SWIOFC, SEAFO, SPRFMO, and CCSBT, as appropriate. | MoP endorses this recommendation, the MoP notes that cooperation with CCAMLR and other bodies (eg FAO) is also necessary. | H | SC, CC, MoP Secretariat | ongoing |  |
| 44 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs consider setting up a section on the SIOFA website dedicated to SIOFA´s implementation of Article 13 of the Agreement, presenting the assistance that may be provided individually or collectively by CCPs to meet the special requirement of CCP developing States including, in particular, the least developed among them, and small island developing States. | MoP endorsed this recommendation, and notes the comments provided by the SC | M | SC, CC, MoP Secretariat | 3 years | The Secretariat notes that the SIOFA website is capable of supporting a dedicated section for the implementation of article 13 of the Agreements, and can be implemented once the content is advised by the MoP. |
| -- | Recommendations nr 6, 31 and 34 on various areas where capacity building assistance could be provided by SIOFA also apply to the issues assessed under this criterion. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 46 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs urgently agree on a strategic financial planning for the medium term taking into account the costs incurred over recent years for the funding of the Scientific Committee work, and commit to a fairer sharing of these costs, including by contributing in kind CCP scientific resources. | MoP endorses this recommendation | H | CCPs MoP | 1 - 3 years |  |
| 47 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs discuss in depth the strategic plan presented by the Executive Secretary in 2022 but extend their discussions not just to the funding aspects of it, but also to its role. For this purpose, an analysis should be carried out of the Secretariat´s degree of autonomy to identify areas where it could be allowed to operate in a more agile way. | MoP endorses this recommendation, MoP notes that is it part of an ongoing process, and notes that the addition of one SO and one CO enhanced the capacity of the Secretariat | M | SC, CC, MoP Secretariat | ongoing |  |
| 48 | The Panel recommends SIOFA CCPs work towards a clear agreement on the use of consultants – or not – for the offices of subsidiary body chairpersons. Were the decision taken to continue using the current contractual arrangements a robust evaluation of the workload and appropriate funding should be agreed, in order to ensure these offices can be effectively and efficiently discharged. | MoP has so far agreed to this arrangement, and also notes that further discussion on the workload and appropriate funding is necessary. | H | SC, CC, MoP | ongoing |  |

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