



SOUTH EAST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANISATION

REPORT OF THE 18TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

24 – 25 November 2021

Virtual

The Secretariat

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Chairperson of SEAFO Commission

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1. Opening of the meeting

The 18th Annual Commission Meeting was convened virtually via the ZOOM online platform, from 24th to 25th November 2021.

The Chairperson, Mr. Stefaan Depypere (EU), welcomed delegates to the meeting.

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The Secretariat was appointed as the rapporteur for the meeting.

3. Adoption of Agenda and Meeting Arrangements

The Commission adopted the agenda ([Appendix I](#)).

4. Introduction and Admission of Observers

The Observers present represented:

- FAO – Mr. William Emerson and Mr. Anthony Thompson

The Commission welcomed the participation of observers at the meeting.

5. Opening Statements by Contracting Parties and Observers

Five of the six Contracting Parties were represented. The Republic of South Africa was not represented but the meeting noted the presence of the South African scientist.

The Chairperson delivered a short opening address. The full opening address are in [Appendix IV](#).

Contracting Parties presented short opening statements. The full opening statements are in [Appendix IV](#). The list of participants is in [Appendix II](#).

6. Status of the Convention in Respect of Membership

The Chairperson informed the meeting that no new notification for accession to the Convention was received during 2021 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Norway withdrew from the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Fisheries Resources in the South East Atlantic on the 28th October 2020 and officially left SEAFO on the 28th October 2021.

7. Report of the 2021 Scientific Committee (SC) Meeting

7.1. The Chair of the Scientific Committee, Dr. Paul Kainge (Namibia), presented the 2021 SC meeting report ([DOC/COM/03/2021](#)) to the Commission

Twenty-two Scientific Committee members from 5 Contracting Parties attended the Scientific Committee meeting. Observers from CEFAS (University of Plymouth, UK) and the FAO were present. The Commission noted that The Republic of Korea did not attend the meeting and recalled the importance of attending SC meetings.

ACTION: The Commission adopted the [2021 SC meeting report](#).

7.2. Review of Orange roughy TAC

The SC recommended a TAC for 2022-2023 of zero tonnes with a 4 tonnes bycatch allowance in Division B1 and 50 tonnes in the remainder of the SEAFO CA, subject to exploratory fishing protocols.

ACTION: The Commission adopted the TAC recommendation.

For 2023-2024, the SC recommended that a research quota is set for a pre-planned research survey inside Division B1, to be conducted with a suitable commercial vessel. A task team has been established to draft a survey proposal to be presented to the Commission for approval.

7.3. Review of Deep-sea red crab TAC

SC recommended a TAC for 2022 - 2023 to be set at 162 tonnes for Division B1, and 200 tonnes (status quo) for the remainder of the SEAFO CA.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

7.4. Review of Patagonian toothfish TAC

The SC recommended a TAC for 2022-2023 for Sub-Area D of 261 tonnes and a zero TAC for the remainder of the SEAFO CA.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

7.5. Review of Alfonsino TAC

The SC recommended a TAC for 2022-2023 of 200 tonnes (status quo) for the SEAFO CA, of which a maximum of 132 tonnes may be taken in Division B1 for 2022-2023.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

7.6. Review of Pelagic armourhead / Southern boarfish TAC

The SC recommended a TAC for 2022-2023 of 135 tonnes for the SEAFO CA (status quo).

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

7.7. Budget 2022

The SC recommended to keep the N\$220,000.00 for genetic analysis of orange roughy samples which was allocated to the budget in 2019.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

7.8. ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project (DSF).

Dr. Anthony Thompson (FAO) provided an update on the development of the second phase of the ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project (DSF).

The Scientific Committee supports SEAFO in becoming a partner to the DSF Project and recommended that this is approved by the Commission.

ACTION: The Commission approved this recommendation.

8. Report of the 2021 Compliance Committee (CC) Meeting

The Chair of the Compliance Committee, Mr. Ichiro Nomura (Japan), presented the 2021 Compliance Committee Report ([DOC/COM/04/2021](#)) to the Commission.

ACTION: The Commission adopted the 2021 CC meeting report.

8.1. Consideration of the provisional SEAFO IUU Vessel list

The CC recommended to the Commission to adopt the SEAFO IUU vessel list for 2022 presented in [DOC/CC/04/2021](#).

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

9. Report of the 2021 Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (SCAF) Meeting

The Chair of SCAF, Ms. Graça D'Almeida (Namibia), presented the 2021 SCAF Report ([DOC/COM/05/2021](#)) to the Commission.

The Commission tasked the ES to look into possibilities for training Angolan delegates in the English language.

ACTION: The Commission adopted the 2021 SCAF meeting report.

9.1 Approval of the 2020 Draft Annual Financial Statement (AFS).

The SCAF recommended to the Commission to approve the Audited Annual Financial Statements.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

9.2 Approval of the 2022 Budget and 2023 forecast Budget

The SCAF proposed the budget for 2022 of N\$ 3,091,057.48 to be approved by the Commission.

ACTION: The Commission approved the budget of N\$ 3,091,057.48.

9.3 Approval of the 2022 Contributions of Parties

Contributions by parties were calculated based on the formula adopted in 2009 and the SCAF proposed the Contributions for 2022 to be approved by the Commission.

ACTION: The Commission approved the contributions of Parties for 2022.

10. Report back from meetings attended by the Secretariat

The Executive Secretary submitted a document ([DOC/COM/06/2021](#)) to the meeting in which a synthesis of the meetings she attended during 2021 was presented.

The Commission took note of the report presented by the Executive Secretary and encourage the participation of the ES in relevant meetings.

11. Reports of SEAFO Representatives at 2021 meetings of other Intergovernmental Organisations

Japan submitted a report as SEAFO Observer to the 22nd Special Meeting of The International Commission for The Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, it was not possible to hold the 22nd Special Meeting of the Commission as originally foreseen. Notwithstanding, the CPCs agreed to carry out a decision-making process through correspondence.

The EU submitted reports to the Annual meetings of NAFO (The 43rd Annual meeting, 20 to 24 September 2021) and SIOFA (The 8th Meeting of the Parties, 5-9 July 2021).

12. Nominations of Parties to represent SEAFO at 2022 meetings of other International Organisations

The Commission adopted the following nominees to represent SEAFO as observers at the following meetings:

ICCAT – Japan

NEAFC – EU

The ES was tasked by the Commission to contact South Africa to represent SEAFO at the CCAMLR meeting. Depending on the outcome of that the rest of the representatives are provisional and will be confirmed to the CPs later by the ES.

CCAMLR – *South Africa* (Japan)

NAFO – EU (if Japan takes SIOFA)

SIOFA – Japan (EU)

13. Future Biennial Commission Meetings

Contracting Parties expressed their views on this matter. It was clear from the discussion that annual meetings are needed to conduct the business of SEAFO. Consensus were reached that virtual meetings are useful but cannot substitute physical meetings. Hybrid meetings where some parties meet physically, and the rest virtually have challenges of its own with different dynamics in the two groups.

The budget of SEAFO could be more efficiently utilised by convening physically on a biennial basis, reducing spending on meeting costs. Further efficiencies in the cost of physical meetings will be investigated by the Secretariat.

The meeting agreed:

To continue to have annual meetings.

On the principle of having biennial physical meetings.

That the next physical meeting will be in 2022 subject to the restriction of the pandemic.

14. Any other matters

14.1 SEAFO next Performance Review

The Executive Secretary presented a document summarizing requirements for conducting RFMO performance reviews ([DOC/COM/07/2021](#)) and brought the point before the Commission for further discussion.

The Commission noted the point and emanated that the cost of an external review is considerable and will have a huge impact on the SEAFO budget. There is also no urgent need for a review performance wise.

ACTION: The ES have to look into the recommendations of the 2016 performance review and give feedback to the meeting in 2022 to review the way forward.

14.2 ABNJ Deep-Sea Fisheries Project Renewal – SEAFO in-kind Contribution

William Emerson presented an overview of the second phase of the GEF-FAO ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project called “Deep-Sea Fisheries under the Ecosystem Approach” which will run from 2022 – 2027 ([DOC/COM/08/2021](#)).

The Commission expressed their gratitude toward the project which brought many benefits to SEAFO over the years.

The Commission approved of the signing of the in-kind contribution letter by the Executive Secretary.

15. Venue and Date of next meetings

- Proposed dates for the 2022 Scientific Committee meeting are 22 – 25 November 2022.
- Proposed dates for the 2022 Annual Commission meeting (including SCAF and CC) are 28 November – 1 December 2022.
- The venue for the 2022 Scientific and Annual Commission meetings is Swakopmund or Walvis Bay in Namibia.

ACTION: The Commission agreed to the proposed meeting dates and venue

16. Adoption of the 2021 Commission report

The Commission adopted the report.

17. Closure of the Meeting

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 11:47 on Thursday 25th November 2022 and he commended the Contracting Parties for their efficient and effective conduct during the meeting. He thanked the Secretariat for the preparations. He also thanked delegates for their positive inputs.

APPENDIX I: List of Documents, Agenda and Annotated Agenda of the 2021 Commission Meeting

DOC/COM/00/2021



LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE 18TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (COM) - 2021

CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Stefaan DEPYPERE (EU 2021-2022)

VENUE: Virtual

VICE-CHAIR: Mr. Ichiro NOMURA (Japan 2021-2022)

DATE: 24 & 25 November 2021

Document Number	Agenda Item	Document Title	Provider	Availability of Document
DOC/COM/00/2021	All	List of documents	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/01/2021	3	Provisional Agenda for the 18 th Meeting of the Commission	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/02/2021	3	Provisional Annotated Agenda for the 18 th Meeting of the Commission	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/03/2021	7	Scientific Committee Meeting Report for 2021	SC	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/04/2021	8	Compliance Committee Meeting Report for 2021	CC	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/05/2021	9	Standing Committee on Admin & Finance Meeting Report of 2021	SCAF	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/06/2021	10	Report on meetings attended by the Executive Secretary during 2021	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/07/2021	14	SEAFO Future Performance Review	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/08/2021	14	ABNJ Deep Seas Project Renewal – SEAFO in-kind contribution	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/09/2021	16	Commission Meeting Report for 2021	COM	Available at the meeting

DOC/COM/01/2021



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South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO)

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE 18TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE COMMISSION (COM) – 2021**

CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Stefaan DEYPERE (EU 2021-2022)**VENUE:** Virtual**VICE-CHAIR:** Mr. Ichiro NOMURA (Japan 2021-2022)**DATE:** 24 & 25 November 2021

Item	Agenda Item	Working Document
1	Opening of meeting by Chairperson	
2	Appointment of rapporteur	
3	Adoption of Agenda and meeting arrangements	DOC/COM/00/2021 DOC/COM/01/2021 DOC/COM/02/2021
4	Introduction & Admission of Observers	
5	Opening statements by Contracting Parties	
6	Status of the Convention in respect of membership	
7	Report of the 2021 Scientific Committee meeting	DOC/COM/03/2021
8	Report of the 2021 Compliance Committee meeting	DOC/COM/04/2021
9	Report of the 2021 Standing Committee on Administration & Finance meeting	DOC/COM/05/2021
10	Report on meetings attended by Secretariat	DOC/COM/06/2021
11	Reports of SEAFO's representatives at other intergovernmental organization meetings	
12	Nomination of Parties representing SEAFO at intergovernmental organizations	
13	Discussion on future biennial Commission meetings	
14	Any other matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEAFO Next Performance Review • ABNJ Deep-seas Project Renewal – SEAFO in-kind Contribution 	DOC/COM/07/2021 DOC/COM/08/2021
15	Venue & date of next meeting	
16	Adoption of the 2021 Commission Report	DOC/COM/09/2021
17	Closure of meeting	

DOC/COM/02/2021



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South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO)

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR THE 18TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (COM) – 2021

CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Stefaan DEPYPERE (EU 2021-2022)	VENUE: Virtual
VICE-CHAIR: Mr. Ichiro NOMURA (Japan 2021-2022)	DATE: 24 & 25 November 2021

- 1. Opening of meeting**
The meeting will officially be opened by the Chairperson of the Commission.
- 2. Appointment of Rapporteur**
The Chairperson will ensure the appointment of a rapporteur.
- 3. Adoption of Agenda and meeting arrangements**
Members will review and adopt the agenda ([DOC/COM/01/2021](#), [DOC/COM/02/2021](#)). The Executive Secretary will inform the Delegation of any practical arrangements for the meeting.
- 4. Introduction and admission of Observers**
The Chairperson will announce Observers present.
- 5. Opening Statement by Contracting Parties and Observers**
The Heads of Delegations will introduce their members and make opening statements. Written opening statements should be provided to the Secretariate before the meeting to be included in the meeting report. Observers who wish to make opening statements will do so after the opening statements of the Contracting Parties.
- 6. Status of the Convention in respect of membership**
The Chairperson will inform members of the current status of accession to the Convention.
- 7. Presentation of the 2021 Scientific Committee Report**
The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee will present a summary of the Scientific Report including scientific advice and recommendations to the Commission ([DOC/COM/03/2021](#)). The Commission will discuss the Scientific Report and take appropriate decisions on the recommendations made.
- 8. Presentation of the 2021 Compliance Committee Report**
The Chairperson of the Compliance Committee will present a summary of the Compliance Committee Report including recommendations to the Commission ([DOC/COM/04/2021](#)). The Commission will discuss the Compliance Committee Report and take appropriate decisions on the recommendations made.
- 9. Presentation of the 2021 Standing Committee on Administration and Finance Report**
The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance will present a summary of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance Report including recommendations to the Commission ([DOC/COM/05/2021](#)). The Commission will discuss the report and take appropriate decisions on the recommendation made.
- 10. Report on meetings attended by the Secretariat**
The Executive Secretary will provide a report on meetings attended during 2021 ([DOC/COM/06/2021](#)).

DOC/COM/02/2021

11. Reports of SEAFO Representatives at the 2020/2021 meetings of other Intergovernmental Organisations

SEAFO representatives at the 2020/2021 meetings of the other Intergovernmental Organisations will report back to the Commission on meetings attended. SEAFO representatives will bring to the attention of the members specific issues(s), if any, arose from the meetings.

ICCAT: Japan
NAFO and SIOFA: EU
NEAFC and CCAMLR: Norway

12. Nominations of Parties to represent SEAFO at other International Organisations in 2020

The Commission will nominate representatives for the following meetings:

ICCAT
NEAFC
NAFO
CCAMLR
SIOFA

13. Future Biennial Meetings

These discussions started during the 2017 annual meeting and was carried over to the next year's meeting for further discussions on potential biennial Commission meeting. During the 2019 Annual meeting, the following action point was concluded:

ACTION: The meeting agreed to examine the practicalities of conducting virtual Commission meetings every second year and consider adopting it during the 2020 Commission meeting.

14. Any other matters

The Committee will discuss any other matters raised that was not previously included in the agenda.

14.1 SEAFO next performance review ([DOC/COM/07/2021](#)).

14.2 ABNJ Deep-sea fisheries Project renewal – SEAFO in-kind contribution ([DOC/COM/08/2021](#)).

15. Venue and date of the next Commission meeting

The members will agree on a venue and date for the next Commission meeting.

16. Adoption of the 2021 Commission Report

The meeting report will be adopted ([DOC/COM/09/2021](#)).

17. Closure of meeting

The Chairperson will close and adjourn the meeting after all items have been concluded.

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Appendix III: Opening Address

CHAIR PERSON (EU)

Dear Colleagues, representatives of the Contracting Parties to the SEAFO Convention and members of the team, dear observers, it is a pleasure to welcome you to this Commission meeting. Regretfully, given the restrictions due to the COVID pandemic, we meet in virtual manner. A virtual meeting is only second best compared to a real meeting but given the circumstances, it allows us at least to keep our scientific and management processes alive.

As you will see, the present meeting has been thoroughly prepared by our subsidiary bodies, working on science, finance and administration and on compliance.

I would just stress at this point how important all this work is for the global governance of our oceanic ecosystem. RFMOs and for our convention area, SEAFO, are critical building blocks and reliable partners to monitor and improve the state of the oceans and their resources. The presence, at this meeting, of two distinguished representatives of the FAO gives us an indication also of the importance of our work for the global system.

By managing this RFMO, you contribute to the proper functioning of the network of RFMOs that covers the oceans and seas. This network must be considered as a global public good working for the benefit of mankind. It is recognised and valued at the highest level, in the Sustainable Development Goal 14 adopted by the United Nations.

So, we have an important mission to fulfil and even if we may be one of the smaller RFMOs, it matters for the global governance system that we carry out our mission with due diligence. I look forward to our work and hereby formally declare open the 16th Annual Meeting of the Commission.

Appendix IV: Opening Statements:**Angola**

INTERVENÇÃO DO CHEFE DE DELEGAÇÃO DE ANGOLA NA 18ª REUNIÃO DA COMISSÃO DA SEAFO DO ANO 2021

Mojito Boom Dia Senhor Presidente da Comissão.

Bom dia extensível a todos os Membros das Delegações presentes a esta reunião, incluindo o Secretariado Executivo. Agradecer desde já o convite endereçado à República de Angola para participar nesta 18ª reunião Anual da Comissão da SEAFO.

Como sabeis, Angola assinou a Convenção da SEAFO em Abril de 2001, e desde então teve sempre uma participação activa nas reuniões anuais da Comissão, bem como nos diferentes Comitês que comportam a Organização, nomeadamente, Comité de Cumprimento, Comité Científico e Comité de Administração e Finanças.

É notório afirmar, que pese embora os constrangimentos de índole financeira que o País em particular e o mundo no geral atravessam, Angola tem sabido cumprir na íntegra com as suas obrigações contributivas, juntando-se assim aos esforços das outras Partes Contratantes, visando o garante do funcionamento normal da nossa Organização.

Daí que, temos a obrigação moral de tornarmos a SEAFO mais intensa com acções concretas, mormente na componente de formação, monitorização e nos diversos estudos científicos que possam vir a realizar-se, o que vai permitir sobremaneira melhorar o conhecimento do ecossistema e dos recursos marinhos disponíveis na Área de Convenção e concomitantemente garantir a exploração sustentável destes mesmos mananciais.

Estimados Membros da Comissão da SEAFO, amiúde os nossos Dirigentes têm estado a questionar sobre o impacto das acções e/ou tarefas desenvolvidas no âmbito da SEAFO, que na realidade ainda não vislumbram uma certa notoriedade, pois que, as acções são muito reduzidas. Portanto é necessário envidarmos mais esforços nas nossas acções, porque só desta forma poderemos convencer os Governantes na necessidade de contínuo apoio para a manutenção e crescimento da SEAFO.

Devemos tornar os recursos disponíveis na zona da Convenção da SEAFO mais apetecíveis aos olhos dos operadores de pesca dos nossos Países, para que os mesmos se sintam encorajados a investir na sua exploração.

É do conhecimento de todos que por conta da Pandemia COVID 19 que assola neste momento todos os Países do Mundo, a reunião realiza-se através da plataforma zoom. Em nossa opinião as reuniões presenciais tornam-se mais atractivas, interactivas e são mais produtivas, pelo que, auguramos que no próximo ano os eventos da SEAFO sejam presenciais, obviamente cumprindo com todas as medidas de biossegurança recomendadas pelos Órgãos de Saúde Pública.

Que a 18ª Reunião Anual da Comissão da SEAFO seja coroada de êxitos.

Bem Haja!

Muito Obrigado.

INTERVENTION OF THE HEAD OF DELEGATION OF ANGOLA AT the 18th MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF THE SEAFO OF THE YEAR 2021 (English)

Very Good Day Mr President of the Commission.

Good morning extendable to all members of delegations attending this meeting, including the Executive Secretariat. Thank you for the invitation addressed to the Republic of Angola to participate in this 18th Annual Meeting of the SEAFO Commission.

As you know, Angola signed the SEAFO Convention in April 2001, and since then has always had an active participation in the annual meetings of the Commission, as well as in the different Committees that include the Organization, namely the Compliance Committee, the Scientific Committee and the Committee on Administration and Finance. It is well known to say that despite the financial constraints that the country in particular and the world in general are experiencing, Angola has been able to fully comply with its contributory obligations, thus joining the efforts of the other Contracting Parties, aiming at ensuring the normal functioning of our Organisation.

That is why we have a moral obligation to make SEAFO more intense with concrete actions, in particular in the training, monitoring component and in the various scientific studies that may take place, which will greatly improve the knowledge of the ecosystem and marine resources available in the Convention Area and at the same time ensure the sustainable exploitation of these same springs.

Dear Members of the SEAFO Committee, our Leaders have often been questioning the impact of the actions and/or tasks carried out under SEAFO, which in fact do not yet see a certain notoriety, because actions are very low. Therefore, more needs to be made in our actions, because only in this way can we convince the Governments that we need continuous support for the maintenance and growth of SEAFO. We must make the resources available in the SEAFO Convention area more desirable in the eyes of our countries' fishing operators, so that they feel encouraged to invest in their exploitation.

It is known to all that because of the COVID 19 Pandemic that is currently in the world, the meeting takes place through the zoom platform. In our opinion, face-to-face meetings become more attractive, interactive and more productive, so we would like to believe that next year's SEAFO events are face-to-face, obviously complying with all biosecurity measures recommended by public health agencies.

May the 18th Annual Meeting of the SEAFO Commission be crowned with success. We'll, be there!

Thank you very much.

EUROPEAN UNION

Mister Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The European Union is pleased to be part of the 18th Annual Meeting of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation.

We would like to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Chair, the SEAFO Secretariat and the rest of SEAFO Parties in order to organize the 18th Annual Meeting of SEAFO, which for the second time in a row takes place virtually. Taking into account the difficult circumstances caused by the continued COVID-19 pandemic, we have all again been required to think about alternative ways for conducting the necessary business of this organisation, but in a format that is safe, cost efficient and which in this case also happens to be greener.

In this regard, the accessibility to new technologies should also facilitate the discussion of what we believe will be one of the most important issues in our agenda; the possibility of organizing a physical Commission meeting biannually.

In our view, the declining fishing activity in the Convention Area and the fact that TACs of harvested species can be set biannually, could justify meeting physically every second year, which in return would provide some financial savings to the Organisation.

The European Union would also like to reiterate its support to the sustainable use of living marine resources, based on scientific evidence, the precautionary approach and considerations of its ecosystem impacts. And in this regard we note that SEAFO has been playing an important role in ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area.

Finally, the EU delegation looks forward to working with all SEAFO Parties in order to achieve the best possible results and to make this virtual Annual Meeting a joint success.

Thank you very much.

JAPAN

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Japanese delegation, and as Vice-Chair of the Commission, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Executive Secretary, Dr. Lizette Voges and the staffs of the SEAFO Secretariat for their tireless efforts for organizing this meeting even under such an arduous situation as caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we unfortunately could not meet face-to-face due to the pandemic, I am glad to participate in this year's Annual meeting of SEAFO for the first time and contribute to discussion for sustainable management of fishery resources in the Convention Area.

As everyone agrees, SEAFO has been playing an important role to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area. Japan fully supports the sustainable use of marine living resources while recognizing the need to minimize possible impact of fisheries on ecosystem based on the scientific evidence.

In our view, one of the most crucial agendas this year concerns the merit of organizing a future physical Commission meeting biennially. We have been discussing this issue since 2017, and have to continue to discuss it at this meeting, including a possibility of organizing of a virtual Commission meeting in the year when the physical Commission meeting is not planned to take place. Norway's withdrawal from SEAFO has negatively affected the financial status of SEAFO and increased contribution incurred to each member. Fishing vessels of only a few members have currently operated in the Convention area for a limited number of stocks, TACs of which are basically set biennially. In addition, we have experienced participation in many virtual meetings of RFMOs with evolving IT technologies, especially since the global pandemic. These facts suggest that we need to re-consider how to hold the Commission meeting and make required decisions. At this meeting, Japan expects that discussion on this important agenda will have substantial progress in order to achieve cost-effectiveness while at the same time carrying out our responsibilities in accordance with the Convention.

With a view to promoting sustainable use of the marine living resources based on scientific evidence in the SEAFO Convention Area, Japan intends to submit a notice of intent for the 2022 exploratory fisheries after this meeting. Japan would cordially ask the members of the Scientific Committee and the Commission to assess the proposed exploratory fisheries during the intersessional period in accordance with the provisions of the relevant conservation and management measure. As before, the assessment of Japan's exploratory fisheries plan would be thus conducted virtually on a correspondence basis.

Finally, I would like to conclude my remarks by hoping that we will have constructive discussions for SEAFO to lead toward a more effective organization.

Thank you very much

NAMIBIA

Chair, Namibia is once again pleased to participate in the 18th Annual Meeting of the SEAFO Commission. Namibia recognizes the presence of all delegations and observers at this meeting and look forward to tangible outcomes.

Chair, I am delighted that we could convene a virtual meeting, this year, which is close to normal, in light of the occurrences of the past two years. Chair, whilst virtual meetings are cost effective and will form a norm of interaction in the future, Namibia recognizes the myriad of challenges some delegations are faced with in attending meetings online. Therefore, we look forward to exploring means of holding cost effective and efficient meetings of the Commission in the future without negatively impacting the organization, and trust that we will find a solution that is amicable to all Parties.

Chair, Namibia noted with concern the lack of attendance of the Committee meetings by some Parties and urge them to consider participating in future meetings to give weight to the recommendations emanating from these Bodies and to the legitimacy of the decisions made by the Commission.

We further apprehensively observed the low fishing activities in the Convention Area, in that only three fishing trips by two Contracting Parties vessels took place during the period under review and encourage more Contracting Parties to participate in the SEAFO fishery, as the catches are well below the TAC threshold for all species. We believe that, in so doing, some of the challenges associated with the lack of data and data gaps will be addressed, as fishing activities and explorations will enable the collection of pertinent data and a more robust stock assessment and thereby ensuring the sustainability of the resources under our purview.

Chair, Namibia also noted the non-compliance of the EU with the Reporting Requirements and Obligations, in that the submission of some reports was done beyond the reporting deadlines specified in the SEAFO System, and we encourage the EU to adhere to these timelines of reporting in the future. On a positive note, Chair, Namibia applauds Japan for adhering to the Reporting requirements and Obligations, as all its reports were submitted within the required timeframe.

Chair, Namibia supports the work programme of the Scientific Committee, in particular the proposal to conduct a dedicated survey on orange roughy in the near future. We call for the Commission to

explore avenues of funding such activities, as these will enhance our knowledge of the state of the resource and lead to improved management.

Namibia recognizes and is thankful for the collaboration of SEAFO with the FAO and the training rendered to our fisheries observers and inspectors in areas of SEAFO Forms and reports, species identification and the SEAFO System, including port state measures and we are proud to announce that as a result of the successful training, Namibia was able to monitor and inspect the Japanese crab vessel in the port of Walvis Bay and submit a complete Port Inspection Report to the SEAFO Secretariat in three days, which is well within the requirement of 14 days. Namibia is also aware and appreciates the support of the kingdom of Norway through the FAO/EAF-Nansen program in undertaking a scientific survey in SEAFO CA, despite no longer being a Party to the Convention. The Results of such surveys will provide the much needed scientific information to enhance the understanding and management of these important fishing grounds, and hence we encourage the continued support by non-Contracting Parties.

Lastly Chair, Namibia wishes to commend the Secretariat for the excellent work and support provided for the meeting. We look forward to the deliberations during this meeting and hope that we shall reach consensus, bearing in mind our responsibility to sustainably utilize the SEAFO CA resources.

I thank you Chair