



SOUTH EAST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANISATION

REPORT OF THE 16TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

25 - 28 November 2019

Swakopmund

NAMIBIA

The Secretariat

NatMirc Bldg, Strand Street No. 1

Swakopmund, Namibia

Phone: + 264 (64) 406-885

Email: info@seafo.org

Url: www.seafo.org

Mr. Venâncio Soares **GOMES (ANGOLA)**

Chairperson of SEAFO Commission

Email: venanciogomes68@gmail.com

1. Opening of the meeting

- 1.1. The 16th Annual Commission Meeting was convened at the Strand Hotel, Swakopmund, Namibia, from 25th to 27th November 2019.
- 1.2. The Chairperson, Mr. Venâncio Soares Gomes, welcomed delegates to the meeting.
- 1.3. The Executive Director of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Namibia, Dr Moses Maurihungiriri delivered an opening address and opened the meeting officially.

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](#)) with the following items to be added:

- Addition to Agenda item 14 – [DOC/COM/14/2019](#) – Proposal to change the Rules of Procedures of SC - submitted by Norway
- Request from the Secretariate to move item 14.3 forward on the agenda, after agenda item 7 due to the presenter from the FAO who must leave early.

The Executive Secretary introduced the submission of document [DOC/COM/13/2019](#) to the meeting.

4. Introduction and Admission of Observers

The Observers present represented:

- FAO – Mr William Emerson
- Benguela Current Convention (BCC) – Mr Xolela Wellem
- Taiyo Namibia (PTY) Ltd – Mr Antonio Mansino

The Commission welcomed the participation of observers at the meeting.

5. Opening Statements by Contracting Parties and Observers

Five of the seven Contracting Parties were represented. The Republic of Korea and EU were not represented.

Contracting Parties presented their opening statements ([Appendix IV](#)) and introduced their respective delegates.

The list of participants is provided 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 2019 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

7. Future Biennial Commission Meetings

The meeting discussed various aspects of having biennial physical Commission meetings with the physical meetings coinciding with the same years in which the Commission sets TAC's. Every second year, the Commission meetings should then be conducted by correspondence. Email correspondence was suggested, since not all contracting parties have fast enough internet connections to participate in live broadcasted meetings.

It was agreed by parties to test such email correspondence during 2020 when a proposal for exploratory fishing will be discussed by correspondence intersessionally.

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

8. Report of the 2019 Scientific Committee Meeting

8.1. The Chair of the Scientific Committee, Åge Høines (Norway), presented the 2019 SC report to the Commission ([DOC/COM/03/2019](#)).

8.2. Eleven Scientific Committee members from 4 Contracting Parties attended the Scientific Committee meeting. An observer from CEFAS (UK) attended the meeting.

The Commission noted that three CP's (Angola, EU and The Republic of Korea) did not attend the meeting and recalled the importance of attending SC meetings.

8.3. VME indicators recorded during 2019 Nansen Seamount Survey

The SC recommended that, given the presence of VME indicators in the Shannon and Discovery seamounts, the Commission should take precautionary action within existing fishing areas (i.e. closure for bottom trawling).

Co-ordinates for proposed closure of bottom trawling in existing fishing area in Division D0:

Latitudes	Longitudes
44°W	1°E
42°W	1°E
42°W	3°E
44°W	3°E

The Commission did not come to an agreement on this issue.

8.4. FarFish proposal for pilot e-logbook project (DOC/SC/14/2019).

The SC agreed that no further action is required from the Commission on this proposal from the FarFish Project.

ACTION: The Commission took note of the SC decision

8.5. FarFish request for access to SEAFO VMS data (DOC/SC/15/2019).

The SC referred the request for access to SEAFO VMS data on EU vessels active within the SEAFO CA to the Commission for further consideration.

The Commission agreed that the ES should inform FarFish that no VMS data for EU vessels exist in the SEAFO system.

8.6. Data request for collaboration on cold water coral habitat modeling (DOC/SC/16/2019).

The SC recommended the Commission to support the CEFAS request for access to all high-res (i.e. ship-based) bathymetry data from the SEAFO CA and collaboration between SEAFO, EAF Nansen Programme and UK.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

8.7. Budget 2020.

The SC recommended to keep the N\$220 000 for genetic (genomics) analysis of orange roughy samples which was allocated to the budget in 2018 for genetic analysis.

ACTION: The Commission approved the SC recommendation

9. Report of the 2019 Compliance Committee Meeting

The Chair of the Compliance Committee, Mr. Kenro Iino (Japan), presented the 2019 Compliance Committee Report to the Commission ([DOC/COM/04/2019](#)).

9.1. Annual Review of the “SYSTEM”

The CC endorsed the correction of Article 12 by changing “Tonnes per species” to “kilogram per species” and recommend to the Commission to direct to the SC to examine the proposed amendment to Article 8 (b) and (d) on the level of lost and/or abandoned gear by gear type, which would eventually cause significant adverse effect on marine living resources in the CA, so that the CC could determine relevant amendments of the SEAFO SYSTEM.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this proposal.

9.2. Consideration of the provisional SEAFO IUU Vessel list cf. SEAFO “SYSTEM”

The CC recommended to the Commission to adopt the SEAFO IUU vessel list presented in [DOC/CC/05/2019](#) and to keep the FV Cape Flower on the list.

ACTION: The Commission adopted this recommendation.

10. Report of the 2019 Standing Committee on Administration and Finance (SCAF) Meeting

The Chair of SCAF, Mr. Hideki Moronuki (Japan), presented the 2019 SCAF Report ([DOC/COM/05/2019](#)) to the Commission.

10.1 Approval of the 2018 Draft Annual Financial Statement (AFS).

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

ACTION: The Commission adopted the recommendation.

10.2 Staff Regulations changes to comply with the Namibian Labour Law

The SCAF adopted some changes based on the recommendations ([DOC/SCAF/06/2019](#)) of the labour consultant and amended the existing [Staff Regulations](#) and recommend to the Commission for approval.

ACTION: The Commission adopted the recommended changes
(Angola will submit the changes to the Angolan government for fulfilment of internal procedures)

10.3 Approval of the 2020 Budget and 2021 forecast Budget

The SCAF proposed the budget for 2020 of N\$ 4,159,831.23 to be approved by the Commission.

ACTION: The Commission approved the budget of N\$ 4,159,831.23.

10.4 Approval of the 2020 Contributions of Parties

Contributions by parties were calculated based on the formula adopted in 2009 and the SCAF proposed the Contributions for 2020 to be approved by the Commission.

ACTION: The Commission approved the contributions of Parties for 2020

10.5 Renewal of the three-year agreement of the current auditors.

The SCAF agreed to the reappointment of the auditors for another three-year period (2021-2023) and recommend to the Commission to adopt the proposal.

ACTION: The Commission adopted the proposal.

10.6 Review of the position of the Executive Secretary

The SCAF noted the good performance of the current ES and recommend to the Commission to extend the contract for a four-year term (Feb 2021 to end of Jan 2024).

ACTION: The Commission adopted the recommendation

11. Report back from meetings attended by the Secretariat

The following reports on meetings presented by the Executive Secretary during 2019, were submitted to the Commission and the Commission took note of them. A synthesis of each meeting was presented.

11.1. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Deep Seas Project Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting. 23–25 January 2019, Saint Denis, Reunion ([DOC/COM/06/2019](#)).

11.2. Feedback Report on the Intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). Third session, New York, 19-30 August 2019 ([DOC/COM/07/2019](#)).

The Commission took note of the reports presented by the Executive Secretary

12. Reports of SEAFO Representatives at 2019 meetings of other Intergovernmental Organisations.

The Commission noted the following reports that were submitted.

- CCAMLR annual meeting - Norway ([DOC/COM/16/2019](#)).
- NEAFC annual meeting - Norway ([DOC/COM/15/2019](#)).
- ICCAT 2018 annual meeting - Japan ([DOC/COM/13/2019](#)).

13. Nominations of Parties to represent SEAFO at 2020 meetings of other International Organizations

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

- ICCAT(2019), NAFO & SIOFA: Japan
- CCAMLR & NEAFC: Norway

14. Any other matters

14.1 Request for IUU information of Cape Flower Chairperson SPRFMO ([DOC/COM/10/2019](#)).

The Executive Secretary presented a request from Oswaldo Urrutia for access to the documentation dealing with the IUU vessel listing, FV Cape Flower, to be used in his PhD studies.

ACTION: The Commission disapproved the request to share this information due to the sensitivity of this case.

14.2 Invitation for SEAFO contributions to A BETTER WORLD Publication Ben Cornwell - Project Coordinator ([DOC/COM/11/2019](#)).

The Executive Secretary presented a request for SEAFO to act as contributor (Programme Partner) to A BETTER WORLD Vol 6, a landmark outreach book from the Human Development Forum on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources.

ACTION: The Commission approved that the Executive Secretary can write an article for the book, but no financial contribution will be made towards the project for distributing books.

14.3 Update on the ABNJ Deep Seas Project for 2019

The Coordinator of the project (Mr William Emerson) presented an update report from the ABNJ Deep Seas Project for 2019 ([DOC/COM/08/2019](#)). The Commission expresses their appreciation for the work done by the ABNJ Deep Seas Project and encourage further collaboration with SEAFO.

14.4 Proposal to change the Rules of Procedure of the SC ([DOC/COM/14/2019](#)) - Norway

The purpose of this proposal was to emphasise the role the SC plays in the decision-making process and how scientists conduct themselves within the SC meeting by functioning as a neutral scientific body, contrasting to the desires of their flag country.

ACTION: The Commission could not agree on this point and it was agreed that a draft should be prepared intersessionally to be presented to the Commission in 2020.

14.5 Additional Points

The Commission agreed to discuss another point raised by Angola.

14.5.1 Translation of documents into Portuguese.

Angola requested for the translation of all documents in Portuguese to be completed prior to the start of the meeting and all documents throughout the year be translated before they are circulated. It was noted that the Secretariat translated a huge number of documents during 2019 – both static and live documents.

ACTION: The Secretariat will continue to provide Portuguese translations in all possible situations.

15. Venue and Date of next meetings

Angola proposed to host the next annual meetings in Luanda. Norway expressed their concern regarding limited travelling budgets to cover the extra cost of travelling to Angola. Preliminary cost analysis shows that only the cost of the venue and the accompanying services to run the meetings will be 33% higher in Luanda than in Swakopmund. This excludes the additional cost of travel and accommodation costs for the Secretariat.

ACTION: The Commission agreed to consider the hosting of the meetings in Angola in future and cost analysis can be done including possible reduction of the cost by moving to biennial virtual meetings.

- Proposed dates for the 2020 Scientific Committee meeting is 16-20 November 2020.
- Proposed dates for the 2020 Annual Commission meeting (including SCAF and CC) is 23-26 November 2020.
- The venue for the 2020 Scientific and Annual Commission meetings is Swakopmund, Namibia.

16. Adoption of the 2019 Commission report

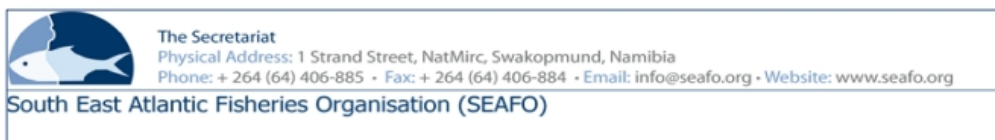
The Commission adopted the report.

17. Closure of the Meeting

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 16:45 on Wednesday 27th November 2019 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 and wished everyone a safe journey back home.

APPENDIX I: List of Documents, Agenda and Annotated Agenda of the 2019 Commission Meeting

DOC/COM/00/2019



LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE 16TH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (COM) - 2019

CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Venâncio Soares Gomes (Angola 2017-2020) **VENUE:** Strand Hotel, Swakopmund
VICE-CHAIR: Mr. Luis Molledo (EU 2017-2020) **DATE:** 25 & 28 November 2019

Document Number	Agenda Item	Document Title	Provider	Availability of Document
DOC/COM/00/2019	3	List of documents	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/01/2019	3	Provisional Agenda for the 16 th Meeting of the Commission	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/02/2019	3	Provisional Annotated Agenda for the 16 th Meeting of the Commission	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/03/2019	8	Scientific Committee Meeting Report for 2019	SC	Available at the meeting
DOC/COM/04/2019	9	Compliance Committee Meeting Report for 2019	CC	Available at the meeting
DOC/COM/05/2019	10	Standing Committee on Admin & Finance Meeting Report of 2019	SCAF	Available at the meeting
DOC/COM/06/2019	11	Feedback Report of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project 4th PSC meeting	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/07/2019	11	Feedback Report on the IGC on a legally binding instrument under the UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine BBNJ	Secretariat	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/08/2019	14	Update on the ABNJ Deep Seas Project - 2019	FAO ABNJ Deep see project coordinator	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/09/2019	8	EAF-NANSEN Programme Data Policy August 2019 update DRAFT	EAF NANSEN Project	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/10/2019	14	Request for IUU information of Cape Flower	Chairperson SPRFMO	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/11/2019	14	Invitation for SEAFO contributions to A BETTER WORLD Publication	Ben Cornwell - Project Coordinator	Available before meeting
DOC/COM/12/2019	16	Commission Meeting Report for 2019	COM	Available at the meeting

Circulation Date: 25 October 2019

DOC/COM/01/2019



The Secretariat

Physical Address: 1 Strand Street, NatMirc, Swakopmund, Namibia

Phone: + 264 (64) 406-885 - Fax: + 264 (64) 406-884 - Email: info@seafo.org - Website: www.seafo.org

South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE 16TH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (COM) – 2019

CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Venâncio Soares Gomes (Angola 2017-2020)**VENUE:** Strand Hotel, Swakopmund**VICE-CHAIR:** Mr. Luis Molledo (EU 2017-2020)**DATE:** 25 & 28 November 2019

Item	Agenda Item	Working Document
1	Opening of meeting by Chairperson	
2	Appointment of rapporteur	
3	Adoption of Agenda and meeting arrangements	DOC/COM/00/2019 DOC/COM/01/2019 DOC/COM/02/2019
4	Introduction & Admission of Observers	
5	Opening statements by Contracting Parties	
6	Status of the Convention in respect of membership	
7	Discussion on future biennial Commission meetings	
8	Report of the 2019 Scientific Committee meeting	DOC/COM/03/2019 DOC/COM/09/2019
9	Report of the 2019 Compliance Committee meeting	DOC/COM/04/2019
10	Report of the 2019 Standing Committee on Administration & Finance meeting	DOC/COM/05/2019
11	Report on meetings attended by Secretariat	DOC/COM/06/2019 DOC/COM/07/2019
12	Reports of SEAFO's representatives at other intergovernmental organisation meetings	
13	Nomination of Parties representing SEAFO at intergovernmental organisations	
14	Any other matters	DOC/COM/08/2019 DOC/COM/10/2019 DOC/COM/11/2019
15	Venue & date of next meeting	
16	Adoption of the 2019 Commission Report	DOC/COM/12/2019
17	Closure of meeting	

Circulation Date: 25 October 2019

DOC/COM/02/2019



PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR THE 16TH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (COM) – 2019

CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Venâncio Soares Gomes (Angola 2017-2020) **VENUE:** Strand Hotel, Swakopmund
VICE-CHAIR: Mr. Luis Molledo (EU 2017-2020) **DATE:** 25 & 28 November 2019

- 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/00/2019](#), [DOC/COM/01/2019](#) and [DOC/COM/02/2019](#)). 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. 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. Future Biennial Meetings**
Further discussions on potential biennial Commission meeting.
- 8. Presentation of the 2019 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/03/2019](#)). The Commission will discuss the Scientific Report and take appropriate decisions on the recommendations made.
The EAF-NANSEN Programme Data Policy August 2019 update ([DOC/COM/09/2019](#)) is available as information, especially to assist with approval of request for cooperation projects using the Nansen survey data.
- 9. Presentation of the 2019 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/04/2019](#)). The Commission will discuss the Compliance Committee Report and take appropriate decisions on the recommendations made.

DOC/COM/02/2019

10. Presentation of the 2019 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/05/2019](#)). The Commission will discuss the report and take appropriate decisions on the recommendation made.

11. Report back on meetings attended by the Secretariat

The Executive Secretary will report back on meetings attended namely:

11.1 ABNJ Deep Seas Project 4th PSC meeting ([DOC/COM/06/2019](#)).

11.2 IGC on a legally binding instrument under the UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine BBNJ ([DOC/COM/07/2019](#)).

12. Report of SEAFO Representatives at the 2019 meetings of other Intergovernmental Organisations

SEAFO representatives at the 2019 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

13. 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

14. Any other matters

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

14.1 Request for IUU information of Cape Flower Chairperson SPRFMO ([DOC/COM/10/2019](#)).

14.2 Invitation for SEAFO contributions to A BETTER WORLD Publication Ben Cornwell - Project Coordinator ([DOC/COM/11/2019](#)).

14.3 Update on the ABNJ Deep Seas Project for 2019

The Coordinator of the project (Mr William Emerson) will present an update report from the ABNJ Deep Seas Project for 2019 ([DOC/COM/08/2019](#)).

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 2019 Commission Report

The meeting report will be adopted ([DOC/COM/12/2019](#)).

17. Closure of meeting

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

APPENDIX II – List of Participants 2019 Commission Meeting**CHAIRPERSON****Venâncio Soares GOMES**

Rua do Mat
Predio C-Andar
Luanda
Angola
Tel: +244 923 806 488
Email: venanciogomes68@gmail.com

ANGOLA

Domingos AZEVEDO (Head of Delegation)
Servico Nacional De Fiscalizacao Pesqueira e da
Aquacultura
Ministerio das Pescas e do Mar
P.O.Box 83
Avenida 4 Fevereiro N:30, Edificio Atlantico
Luanda
Angola
Tel: +24 49 23 340 100
Fax: +24 42 22 309 731
Email: domingosazevedo2001@yahoo.com.br

Paulo CUSSO

Ministerio das Pescas e do Mar
P.O.Box 83
Avenida 4 Fevereiro N:30, Edificio Atlantico
Luanda
Angola
Tel: +24 49 23 340 100
Fax: +24 42 22 309 731
Email: nkuso2015@gmail.com

JAPAN

Mr. Kenro IINO (Head of Delegation)
Special advisor to the Minister of Agriculture
Forestry and Fisheries
1-2-1 Kasumigaseki
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo, 100-8950
Japan
100-8907
Tel: +81 3 3502 8459
Fax: +81 3 3504 2649
Email: keniino@hotmail.com

Hideki MORONUKI

Director for International Negotiations (Counsellor)
Fisheries Agency of Japan
1-2-1, Kasumigaseki
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo, 100-8950
Japan
Tel: +81 3 3502 1086
Email: hideki_moronuki600@maff.go.jp

Yuki MORITA

The Fisheries Agency
1-2-1 Kasumigaseki
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo, 100-8907
Japan
Tel: +81 3 3591 1086
Email: yuki_morita470@maff.go.jp

Tsutomu NISHIDA

Associate Scientist National Research Institute of
Far Seas Fisheries
5-7-1, Orido, Shimizu-Ward
Shizuoka-City
Shizuoka, 424-8633
Japan
Tel/Fax: +81 54 336 5834
Email: aco20320@par.odn.ne.jp

Junichiro OKAMOTO

Japan Overseas Fishing Association
Touei Ogawa-machi Bldg
5F, 2-6-3 Kanda Ogawa-Machi
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 101-0052
Japan
Tel: +81 3 3291 8508
Email: jokamoto@jdsta.or.jp

Yuki KINOSHITA

The Fisheries Agency
1-2-1 Kasumigaseki
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo, 100-8907
Japan
Tel: +81 3 3591 1086
Email: yuki_kinoshita590@maff.go.jp

Atsuko NEGAMI

Manager (Deputy Representative)
Taiyo A&F Co. Ltd., Cape Town Office
19 Foregate Square,
Heerengracht Street,
Foreshore
Cape Town 8000
South Africa
Tel: +27 21 417 3440
Fax: +27 21 417 3450
E-mail: taiyoct@mweb.co.za

Shogo UEKI

Taiyo A & F Co., Ltd
4-5 Toyomi-cho,
Chuou-ku,
Tokyo 104-0055 Japan
Tel: +81 3 6220 1260
Email: s-ueki@maruha-nichiro.co.jp

Shogo SHINOHARA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2-2-1 Kasumigaseki
Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo, 100-8919
Japan
Tel: +81 3-5501 8000
Email: shogo.shinohara@mofa.go.jp

NAMIBIA

Graca B. D'ALMEIDA (Head of Delegation)
Director-Resource Management
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Private Bag 13355
Windhoek
Namibia
Tel: +264 61 205 3015
Fax: +264 61 205 558
Email: Graca.D'Almeida@mfmr.gov.na

Malcolm BLOCK

Control Fisheries Inspector
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
P.O. Box 1594
Walvis Bay
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 201 6250
Fax: +264 64 2016 228
Email: Malcolm.Block@mfmr.gov.na

Rosalia MUPETAMI

Control Fisheries Inspector
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Private Bag 912
Swakopmund
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 201 6250
Fax: +264 64 404 385
Email: rosalia.mupetami@mfmr.gov.na

Titus IILENDE

Deputy Director: Resource Management Ministry of
Fisheries and Marine Resources
Private Bag 13355
Windhoek
Namibia
Tel: +264 61 205 3071
Fax: +264 61 220 558
Email: Titus.Iilende@mfmr.gov.na

Johannes KATHENA

National Marine Information & Research Centre
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Private Bag 912
Swakopmund
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 410 1159
Fax: +264 64 404 385
Email: John.Kathena@mfmr.gov.na

Paul KAINGE

Chief Fisheries Biologist: Resource Management
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Private Bag 912
Swakopmund
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 4101127
Fax: +264-64 404385
Email: Paulus.Kainge@mfmr.gov.na

Stanley NDARA (CEO)

Fisheries Observer Agency
1274W 1st Street, East
Walvis Bay
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 219 500
Email: sndara@foa.com.na

Nepolo JAFET

Fisheries Observer Agency
1274W 1st Street, East
Walvis Bay
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 219 500

NORWAY**Kristoffer BJØRKLUND** (Head of Delegation)

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries
P.O. Box 8090
DEP NO – 0032
Oslo
Norway
Tel: +47 924 13 795
Email: Kristoffer-Krohq.Bjorklund@nfd.dep.no

Åge HØINES

Institute of Marine Research
Nordnesgt. 50
P.O.Box 1870
Nordnes
5817 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47 916 04 952
Email: aage.hoines@hi.no

Arved STABY

Institute of Marine Research
PO Box 1870
Nordnes
5870 Bergen
Tel: +47 916 04 952
Email: arved@hi.no

SOUTH AFRICA**Nkosinathi DANA** (Head of Delegation)

Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
Private Bag X2
Roggebaai
Cape Town
8012
Tel: +27 21 402 3504
Email: NkosinathiD@daff.gov

**BENGUELA CURRENT CONVENTION (BCC)
OBSERVER****Xolela WELLEM**

NATMIRC Building
Strand Street No 1
Swakopmund
Namibia
Tel: +264 64 406 901
Email: Xolela@benquelacc.org

F**OOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
(FAO) OBSERVER****William EMERSON**

Via delle Terme di Caracalla
Rome
Italy
00153
Tel: +39 570 503 51
Email: William.emerson@fao.org

TAIYO NAMIBIA OBSERVER**Antonio Jose dos Santos MANSINHO**

6th Street No 138
Walvis Bay
Namibia
Tel: +264 212 400
Email: antonio@taiyo.com.na

SECRETARIAT**Elizabeth VOGES**

Executive Secretary
NATMIRC Strand Street No. 1
P.O. Box 4862
Vineta
Swakopmund
Tel: +264 64 406885
Email: lvoges@seafo.org

Delita KRAUZE

Admin & Finance Officer
NATMIRC Strand Street No. 1
P.O. Box 4862
Vineta
Swakopmund
Tel: +264 64 406885
Email: dkrauze@seafo.org

[a](#)

Appendix III: Opening Address

Opening Address – Dr Moses Maurihungirire (Permanent Secretary MFMR, Namibia)

OPENING SPEECH OF THE 16TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH EAST ATLANTIC FISHERY
ORGANIZATION – SEAFO

SWAKOPMUND-NAMIBIA

- *ESTEEMED HEADS OF DELEGATIONS,*
- *ESTIMATED DELEGATES OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES,*
- *ESTEEMED OBSERVERS*
- *LADIES AND GENTLEMEN*

On behalf of Her Excellency Madam Minister for Fisheries and the Sea for the Republic of Angola **Dra. Victoria de Barros Neto**, in my personal name and the delegation accompanying me, I would like to firstly thank, for the invitation to preside over the opening of the 15th Annual Meeting of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization-SEAFO, I hereby Present, Cordials Greetings to all delegations present.

Let me also say that it is with great satisfaction and pleasure that I take the floor, according to the opportunity granted to me to preside over this grand event, congratulating the Government of the Republic of Namibia and the Executive secretariat of SEAFO, for the excellent organization, of this important event, in this beautiful town of Swakopmund.

Esteemed members of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen,

Recognizing and congratulating the efforts made by the SEAFO secretariat to implement a dynamism in planning and conducting the activities of this Organization, our support is unconditional.

With this dynamism several activities were carried out and developed during the year 2018, of which we will have the opportunity to hear them during our work.

Still in the path of this dynamism, an effort should be concerted, in the following:

1. The sharing of information of all documents in the Portuguese language;
2. The continuation of the cooperation protocols with the member states;
3. Strengthening the human and technical resources of the Secretariat, with the aim of proceeding with the proper monitoring of SEAFO

Esteemed members of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen,

The value and potential of the oceans are undeniable and constitute one of mankind's richest patrimony, contributing significantly to the progress of societies and to improving the lives of the populations in general.

The sea in particular has essential functionalities that have evolved according to the interests of States and international organizations.

The South East Atlantic Ocean, plays an important role in the development of our countries in particular in food security and job creation.

I consider that the sea, is the geostrategic, geopolitical and economic resource vital to contribute towards the development and creation of value in the world economy, despite being the least explored.

Esteemed members of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen,

Prior to conclusion, I would bring you into remembrance that Angola took over the presidency of this very important organization in 2016, and today the mandate comes to an end, regardless of the challenges that have been recorded, I feel comfortable saying the Institutional duty has been fulfilled.

In this conformity I request support from everyone for the new Chairperson, to whom I wish and hope for a successful mandate.

Thank you very much!

I hereby officially declare open the 15th Annual Meeting of the South East Atlantic Fishery Organization – SEAFO.

Appendix IV: Opening Statements:**Angola**Portuguese:

Caros Membros das Delegações Presentes.

Primeiramente gostaria de agradecer a Deus por nos permitir estar aqui novamente e notar que todos continuam a gozar de boa saúde.

Agradecer de igual modo o convite formulado pelo Secretariado Executivo da SEAFO para participar na 16ª Reunião Anual da Organização, bem assim nas reuniões dos seus Órgãos Subsidiários, nomeadamente o Comité Científico, o Comité de Cumprimento e o Comité de Administração e Finanças.

Estamos completamente gratos ao Governo da República da Namíbia em geral e das Autoridades de Swakopmund em particular pela hospitalidade e as excelentes condições criadas nesta linda cidade, as quais estamos deliciando ao longo da nossa estada.

Senhor Presidente, dado a importância de que se reveste a SEAFO para a região e, sendo Angola um dos países pioneiros na sua criação, continuaremos a ser participes das acções levadas a cabo pela Organização tendentes a engrandecer a mesma.

Julgamos ser pertinente trabalharmos em conjunto no sentido de melhor conhecer os recursos e o ecossistema marinho da zona de convenção da SEAFO, para a correcta protecção e o uso de forma sustentável.

Reiteramos os nossos agradecimentos pela participação neste magno evento.

Muito Obrigado.

English:

Dear Members of the Delegations Present.

First I would like to thank God for allowing us to be here again and to note that everyone continues to enjoy good health.

Thank you equally for the invitation made by the Executive Secretariat of THE SEAFO to participate in the 16th Annual Meeting of the Organisation, as well as in the meetings of its Subsidiary Bodies, in particular the Scientific Committee, the Compliance Committee and the Committee of Administration and Finance.

We are fully grateful to the Government of the Republic of Namibia in general and the Swakopmund Authorities in particular for the hospitality and excellent conditions created in this beautiful city, which we are delighting throughout our stay.

Mr President, given the importance of SEAFO for the region and, as Angola being one of the pioneer countries in its creation, we will continue to participate in the actions carried out by the Organization to enhance it.

We believe it is appropriate to work together to better know the resources and marine ecosystem of the SEAFO convention zone for proper protection and use in a sustainable way.

We reiterate our thanks for participating in this great event.

Thank you very much.

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Japan

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I would like to thank the Government of Namibia for hosting the 16th Annual Meeting of SEAFO with the great hospitality. I am glad to be able to come back again to this beautiful coastal city of Swakopmund. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Secretariat for their excellent preparation for this meeting.

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 taking account of possible impact from fisheries to ecosystem based on the scientific evidences.

In our view, one of the most crucial agendas this year is a possibility of organizing a 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 absent. Japan requests further discussion on this important issue in order to have substantial progress taking into account the recent declining trend in the numbers of fishing vessels operating in the Convention Area and also the fact that TACs of harvested species are basically set biennially. The current situations have required us to secure the cost-effectiveness in holding the Commission meeting.

I would also like to point out that these issues arise from the recent trend observed in this organization. Activities of SEAFO Members in the Convention Area have been diminished with only a few vessels operating for a limited number of stocks. This is largely because, as Japan has repeatedly pointed out, the Convention Area has become less attractive for fishing operations due to the excessive protection of marine ecosystem and severer conservation measures. We fully recognize the importance of the conservation of fishery resources and the protection of the ecosystem surrounding them. We highly regard the concept of precautionary approach. However, there also needs an appropriate balance among the protection of the ecosystem, conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources therein. SEAFO should provide fishermen proper opportunities for achieving conservation and sustainable use of those precious resources, through which appropriate data for relevant scientific assessment could be available for longer period.

I believe this is the right time for us to consider a way how we could properly reactivate SEAFO including through making the Convention Area much more attractive to fishermen.

With a view to promote 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 2020 exploratory fisheries after this meeting. Japan would cordially ask 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. The assessment of Japan's exploratory fisheries plan will be thus conducted virtually on correspondence basis, and we believe such experience will provide us an opportunity to examine the possibility of organizing virtual Commission meetings.

Finally, I would like to conclude my remarks by hoping that we could achieve important progress toward reactivation of SEAFO as more effective organization through constructive discussions among all the participants here during this four-day meeting.

Thank you very much.

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Namibia

Mr Chairman

Distinguished delegates and Observers

Ladies and gentlemen

Namibia has the honour to welcome you all to this year's annual meeting of SEAFO, to be held here at Swakopmund, Namibia. It is indeed a great pleasure to see all of you here today and I am looking forward to a successful meeting.

Mr Chairman, SEAFO, like many other RFMOs the world over is tasked with a great responsibility to conserve and sustainably manage the living natural resources in its Convention Area. The challenge SEAFO is facing, in making informed decisions to sustainably manage these living natural resources is the limited availability of data and information that is needed to formulate the relevant Conservation Measures. It is therefore important for SEAFO to embrace the concept of Precautionary Approach, as this would be a guiding tool where data availability becomes a challenge. And I hope this principle will guide us in our deliberations to reach consensus on matters of substance during this meeting.

It is also important note that any RFMO (including SEAFO) needs to co-operate fully with other RFMOs by sharing data and information, in order to be able to achieve its objectives. In this regard, it is encouraging to note that SEAFO has taken steps to enter into co-operation agreements with other RFMOs, such as CCAMLR. This is commendable, indeed! We would also like to see SEAFO put in more effort to collect data and information that could be used to study the impact of Climate Change on the marine ecosystems, as the impacts of Climate Change are being felt globally on both the marine and terrestrial environments.

With that, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all a very successful meeting and a pleasant stay in our beautiful country. Besides the busy schedule, we have in-front of us, I really hope that you will find some time to relax and enjoy the beautiful and changing weather of our coast.

I look forward to fruitful deliberations during this meeting.

I thank you, Mr Chairman!

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Norway

Norway would like to use this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for arranging the SEAFO annual meeting, and for inviting us to the beautiful town of Swakopmund, here on the scenic coast of Namibia. We would also like to extend our appreciation to the Government of Namibia for its hospitality in this regard.

Norway would like to reiterate its support the sustainable use of living marine resources, based of 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.

Like other RFMOs, SEAFO has taken a series of measures in response to calls from the UN General Assembly to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems, including area closures and a framework concerning identification of existing and new areas. In this context, Norway would like to mention the BBNJ-process, which also will impact the management of fisheries. It is important not to create an instrument that undermines the competences and roles of RFMOs such as SEAFO.

Norway would like to take this opportunity to urge Contracting Parties to include fisheries management expertise in their delegations at the upcoming BBNJ meetings to ensure the interests of fisheries and RFMOs are adequately taken into account.

Norway is looking forward to be informed about the outcome of the Scientific Committee that met last week.

We may consider to amend the rules of procedures of the Committee in order to make it clear that although members represent the different Contracting Parties in the Committee, scientists should commit to serve in their personal capacities (Representatives shall adhere to the objective of SEAFO as described in the SEAFO Convention, ensuring that the advice generated shall be impartial and objective, based on best available science alone, and on best practice for science conduct).

Norway is prepared to work hard for the next days contributing to the success of this year's annual meeting.

Thank you.

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South Africa

Good morning Mr. Chairperson of SEAFO

Heads of Delegations

SEAFO Secretarial and Staff

Observers and others, I have not mentioned

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. Chairperson, on behalf of the South African Delegation, it is my pleasure to take this opportunity to make the opening statement before this committee as South Africa we look forward to your stewardship in the continued management of the high seas marine living resources of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation. South Africa would like to thank the Government as well as the people of the Republic of Namibia for making it possible for SEAFO to host the 2019 Annual commission meeting of this organisation in this beautiful coastal town of Swakopmund.

We are truly grateful as South Africans, to be part of this SEAFO Commission Meeting. Further to this, South Africa is appreciative of all the ground and preparatory work that the Executive Secretariat have done to make this weeks meeting possible and a success. As has been previously reported at these commission meetings, South African continues to have food security, job creation, crime prevention, sustainable livelihoods, to mention but a few as the top of her priority list.

Mr. Chairperson, I am glad to report that South Africa continues the enhancement of the fight against illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) activities both inshore and off-shore through its Operation Phakisa initiative referred to as Marine Protection Services and Governance Lab (MP&G). This is an integrated compliance and enforcement initiative by all affected Joint Law enforcement agencies in the maritime domain. This initiative is led and implemented by the Department of Environmental affairs, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF)

Mr. Chairperson South Africa wishes the 16th Annual Commission meeting a very good success in its deliberations and decisions impacting on the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the Marine Living Resources.

Thank you =====