



SEYCHELLES FISHING AUTHORITY

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA) was created in August 1984 by the Seychelles Fishing Authority (Establishment) Act. This was at a time when the industrial tuna fishing sector started to expand. At its creation, the SFA's mission was to develop the fishing industry to its fullest potential and to safeguard the resource base for sustainable development.

To note, Seychelles has one of the largest Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Western Indian Ocean. Hence, fishing has played a major role in the lives of the people. Revenue from fisheries have been a key contributor to the national growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. It ranks Seychelles amongst the top in Africa as it provides an important source of employment, export revenue and ensures the local food security.

The functions of the Authority laid out in Section 5 of the SFA (Establishment) Act are:

- To promote, organize and develop fishing, fishing industries and fishing resources in the Seychelles.
- To assist in the formulation of the national policy with respect to fishing, fishing industries, and fishing resources and in the implementation of that policy.
- To conduct negotiations, or engage in meetings, seminars, or discussions, with regards to fishing or fisheries or the establishment or operation of fishing industries, whether at a national or international level, on behalf of the Republic or otherwise.
- To identify the manpower training requirements of the Seychelles with regards to fishing and fishing industries; and
- Those mentioned in any other written law.

The Authority is governed by a Board of Directors and led by a Chief Executive Officer appointed by the President of the Republic. The Authority is the executive arm of the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue economy on matters relating to fisheries management. The recent Board of Directors was appointed in February 2021, chaired by Mr. Radley Weber and the new Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Jan Robinson was appointed in October 2023. He is seconded by a Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Ashik Hassan who was appointed in December 2021.

Hence, it has a very important role for the country as it is managing the second most important pillar of the Seychelles economy. The SFA works in close collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy (MFBE), the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (MACCE), the Seychelles Coast Guard (SCG), the Seychelles Ports Authority (SPA),

the Seychelles Maritime Safety Authority (SMSA) and other government institutions, fishermen and boat owners' associations, local and international NGOs, Universities, suppliers, development agencies and other partners. Stakeholder consultations are held on a regular basis regarding the development of the sector.

The SFA's motto seeks to address sustainability both on a national level and in its daily activities.

The SFA is also governed by the Fisheries Sector Policy and Strategy 2019, which states that one of the government's main objectives is to 'foster optimum utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources to ensure ecological and socioeconomic sustainability in resource-use and domestic development, while recognizing traditional norms.'

Currently SFA has eight departments under its core functions as well as support services to ensure that it can undertake the above-mentioned functions. It operates with a team of highly qualified and experienced staff with a dynamic set of skills and academic knowledge. In January 2019, the SFA became an autonomous state-owned enterprise (SOE) which generates and manages its own revenues and expenditures. The main programmes of the SFA revolves around its core function of managing fisheries and provision of services to serve the fishing sector.

SFA requires a structure and staff that supports its existence through a range of technical fields, including fisheries science and management, natural resources economics, statistics, programming and database management, biology and ecology, as well as administrative and technical support for research vessels, monitoring and surveillance platforms, laboratories and IT. Only by maintaining sufficient capacity will SFA be able to address challenges such as overfishing, overcapitalization and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, which requires the strengthening of fisheries governance and capacity for the implementation of operational management plans for each fishery, as specified in the Fisheries Act (2014). Fisheries co-management and civil society engagement constitute an important component of sharing governance responsibilities, but also require dedicated SFA support for capacity building, monitoring and administration. SFA is further called upon to support the development of infrastructures, services, and training for the sector, while also being responsive to emerging issues such as harmful algal blooms and climate change. The importance of education and training cannot be underestimated if SFA is to deliver on this varied mandate.

SFA also prides itself in being an organization that promotes a conducive and motivating work environment. It further extends its values to the community it serves through various community projects such as mangrove planting, cleaning of bays and beaches as well as contributing 1.7 million Seychelles rupees to the 7th of December 2023 Disaster Fund.

2. Details of the SFA Communications Officer

Ms. Julia Malbrook is the Seychelles Fishing Authority, appointed Information Officer from November 2023 to date. The acting Information Officer was Mr. Darrel Antat who took up the position after the resignation of Mrs. Veronica Alphonse- Uzice.

MISSION AND VISION OF THE SFA

The vision of SFA is:

Excellence in sustainable fisheries management and development.

The mission is:

To ensure optimal utilization of the fisheries resources for the benefit of the Seychellois people through sustainable management, ecosystem-based approaches, and integrated development.

The core principles of the Authority aim to enable the authority to implement its mandate in a manner which promotes good governance, transparency, participation, and accountability and according to the internationally recognized best practices in fisheries management.

Mandate of the Seychelles Fishing Authority

The SFA mandate, as provided under Section 5 (a) of the SFA (Establishment) Act, 1984 and Section 4 of the Fisheries Act, 2014, is to maintain sustainable fisheries resources management and fisheries development and can be detailed as followed.

- Fisheries resources development and management
- Fisheries research
- Fisheries statistics
- Fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance
- Fisheries licensing
- Fisheries infrastructure development
- Fisheries post-harvest development
- Aquaculture development
- By-catch management/ control

Mandates under Section 6 of the SFA (Establishment) Act, 1984:

- Fishing port management
- Property management
- VMS installation and maintenance
- Fuel sales to fishermen
- Fuel incentive claims and refund
- Ice production and sales

Its core values are:

To implement the SFA mandate in a manner which promotes good governance, transparency, participation, and accountability and to the internationally recognized best practices in fisheries management as per below listed:

- Integrity and professionalism
- Adaptability
- Inclusiveness and teamwork
- Leadership
- Stewardship
- Equity

ANNUAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS

SR No	ATI ACT REQUIREMENTS	No
1)	The total number of ATI requests for access received.	3
2)	<u>TYPE OF INFORMATION</u>	
	The number of requests for personal information	1
	The number of requests for public domain information	0
	The number of requests for third party information	1
	The number of requests for commercial and confidential Information	1
	The number of requests for law enforcement information	0
	The number of requests for privileged documents	0
	The number of requests for protection of life and safety of an individual information	0
	The number of requests for National Security and defence	0
	The number of requests for international relations	0
	The number of requests for Economic interest of the state	0
	The number of requests for Academic or professional examination and recruitment process information	0
	The number of requests for proposal submitted to Cabinet	0
3)	The number of requests for access granted in full.	3
4)	The number of requests for access refuse in full.	0
	The number of requests for access refuse in part.	0
5)	The number of times each provision of Part III (<i>EXEMPTIONS</i>) was relied on to refuse access in full.	0
	The number of times each provision of Part III (<i>EXEMPTIONS</i>) was relied on to refuse access in part.	0
6)	The number of requests abandoned after request	0
7)	The number of request but no records exist	0
8)	The number of cases in which the periods stipulated in section 11 were extended in terms of section 12.	0

9)	The number of review applications lodged with the head of the information holder.	0
10)	The number of reviews lodged on the ground that a request for access was regarded as having been refused in terms of section 14.	0
11)	The number of cases in which, as a result of a review, access was given to information.	0
12)	The number of requests transferred to another Public Body	0

I. A description of the steps or efforts taken by the head of the body to encourage all officers of that body to comply with the provisions of this Act.

This is an area for improvement for the SFA as it has noticed that public awareness of the AIT is limited and some requests made do not refer to the Act despite it fitting the nature of information stipulated under the Act.

II. Any facts which indicate an effort by the body to administer and implement the spirit and intention of the Act according to its submitted plan.

Despite, the limited awareness made during 2023, SFA has been very active in responding to requests made under the Act. The Authority has responded to all requests within the mandated time frame. A preliminary assessment of the Access to information audit and tasks necessary for increased awareness has been identified. It will be implemented during 2024.

III. Particulars of any penalties imposed against any person under this Act;
YES NO (If yes, list down)

IV. Particulars of any disciplinary action taken against any person under this Act;
YES NO (If yes, list down)

CHALLENGES

SFA has observed that not everyone (the public) is aware of the Act, and they may not address their inquiries with the mention of the Act. This then, reduces the number of requests that could have been recorded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Seychelles Fishing Authority looks forward to the annual training/workshop for Information Officers as this will allow the organization to better deliver its duties.

1) DECLARATION

I declare that in accordance with Section 54 of the Access to Information, Act 2018, the Annual Report are to the best of my knowledge, true, accurate and complete as per the requirements.

.....
Julia Malbrook

Name of Information Officer

.....
[Handwritten Signature]

Signature

.....

Date

I confirm that this Annual Report is verified and true, accurate and complete to my knowledge as the Head of Information Holder of the Seychelles Fishing Authority on the date stated below.

.....
JAN ROBINSON

Name of Head of Information Holder

.....
[Handwritten Signature]

Signature

Dated this 6th of February, 2024



OFFICIAL STAMP

