

MINUTES 26th MEETING
IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
OF THE
MAHÉ PLATEAU TRAP AND LINE FISHERY CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN

International Conference Centre Seychelles (ICCS), Room
2, Mahe

Thursday 28th November 2024

Introduction

The 26th meeting of the Implementation Committee for the Co-Management Plan (ICCP) of the Mahé Plateau demersal trap and line fishery was held at the International Conference Centre Seychelles Conference Room 2, in Victoria, Seychelles, on the 28th of November 2024.

Opening to the meeting

Mr Roy Clarisse, Principal Secretary (PS), Fisheries Department, Ministry of Fisheries and the Blue Economy (MoFBE), opened the meeting, welcomed the participants. Key attendees included law enforcement representatives from the Seychelles Police. Their participation was welcomed by the meeting, in collaborating to enhance compliance with fisheries regulations.

Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting proceeded with the chairperson, Mr Roy Clarisse, PS, Department of Fisheries, MoFBE. The approved agenda is presented in Appendix 1. The list of documents circulated before the meeting is in Appendix 2.

The meeting had an attendance of 24 participants, consisting of seven (7) ICCP members and two (2) other stakeholders or observers. Participants were at liberty to use any of the three national languages. The list of participants is in Appendix 3.

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Ms. Elisa Radegonde, Assistant Manager, Fisheries Management (SFA) and the representative of the ICCP Secretariat, presented the progress documented in the working paper ICCP26/WD/2.

This document covers key updates since the 25th ICCP meeting, held on September 19, 2024. Major developments include:

Communication Initiatives

Produced 30-second public outreach videos showcased on outdoor screens and high-speed Cat coco ferries.

Planned posters to educate the public on identifying redfish species.

Release Ruler Distribution

Continued efforts to ensure compliance with size regulations, with availability at SFA vending outlets.

AM Radio Frequency Accessibility

Discussed the discontinuation of AM frequency; co-financing options explored.

Legislation Updates

Review of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill 2025, including proposed species protection.

Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS)

Updates on action plans and enforcement.

Research Updates

Completion of size-at-maturity studies and concept note for spawning area research.

Fish Handling Practices

Plans for microbial testing of roadside fish sales.

Fishermen Pension Scheme

Framework under development to provide financial security for fishers.

Collaborative Visits

Hosted EU delegate and Madagascar Blue Economy representatives for discussions on sustainable practices.

Surveillance Vessel

Handover of “Surveillance 2” for better fisheries enforcement.

World Fisheries Day

Exhibition to promote sustainable fisheries and career opportunities.

Discussion:

The chair proposed reviewing draft regulations for guitar fish and ray species at the first meeting of the ICCP in 2025. The Fisheries Bill was being finalized by the Ministry of the Blue Economy Department, with its first reading by the Bill's Committee scheduled for the first quarter of next year. An EU consultant was on mission evaluating the performance of the current EU-Seychelles Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement in view of its' expiration in 2026. Previously produced media material was requested for use, and a poster on the differentiation of redfish species was circulated. A correction was made to the working document ICCP26/WD/2, clarifying that the species were harvested through harpooning and should be protected. The giant devil ray should not be placed on the list to be protected under the regulation. The SFA legal officer was working on a draft regulation prohibiting the retain of the species. Unhygienic fish processing in the Baie St Anne area was raised, and the SFA was recommended to engage with Public Health Authority to address this issue. The Deputy Commissioner assured assistance would be provided to enforce the law.

Recommendations:

- The SFA to enquire regarding Seychelles Revenue Commission asking boatowners to submit pay roll.

Actions:

- The Seychelles Revenue Commission mandates monthly salary submission for all individuals, but no official communication has been issued to fishermen representatives.

MCS MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE TO THE FISHERIES REGULATIONS 2021

1. Overview:

The Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) department of the Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA) provided an enforcement report covering January to October 2024.

The SFA Enforcement Unit

Conducted the first mission on the new surveillance vessel acquired under the SWIOFISH 3 programme.

Enforcement Activities: Conducted patrols and inspections in collaboration with the Coast Guard and Marine Police.

Infractions Detected: Issues with vessel markings, untagged fish traps, and undersized fish sales.

Strategic Recommendations:

- Improved community engagement, intelligence-based enforcement, and increased inspections.

Discussion:

The Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA) is addressing issues related to, illegal fishing and the harvest and sale of undersized fish by focusing on strategic monitoring to enhance the effectiveness of enforcement efforts. Cameras are being installed to deter undersized fish on the SFA owned markets, and patrols are being done on a rotation schedule. A joint effort with the Seychelles Coast Guard and Marine Police is being looked into to curb illegal fishing. A joint inspection with the Seychelles Bureau of Standard is being planned to address illicit fish processing fishing on Eden Island. The SFA is opening four positions of enforcement officers for 2025 to beef up its enforcement capacity, complementary to the enforcement vessel, *Surveillance II*, which will be made available for patrols on Praslin and La Digue. Education and awareness campaigns will continue to address the sport and recreational fishermen from selling their catch. The SFA has appointed a senior manager to coordinate stakeholders' reports and prioritize permanent law officers for Praslin and La Digue. The issue of unlicensed fishermen was also a pertinent issue debated on whereby they were not confirming to the regulations in which reference was made to the exchange programme from Sette and Shetland where lesson learned were not being applied to the knowledge acquired.

Additionally, the poor turnout of fishermen to the ICCP was also debated on and possible ways to address the issue.

Recommendation:

- A work plan with a traffic light system is to be devised to monitor progress of the ICCP workplan.
- The exchange program from Sette and Shetland highlighted the structure of fishing associations and recommended that the recommendations to be revisited in 2025 to replicate best practices in Seychelles.

ASSESSMENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF SEYCHELLES' SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FISHERY.

The SWIOFISH3 Project assessed the economic and social value of Seychelles' recreational fishery, revealing that it attracts 20,000–30,000 tourists and 8,500 residents annually, contributing USD 80–94 million to the economy and creating around 1,100–1,200 jobs. Non-resident anglers were primarily the largest.

Key Objectives

The study aims to understand recreational fishing participants, distinguish between non-resident and resident anglers, quantify economic contributions, assess social impacts, and provide sustainable practices for sustainable fishing in Seychelles, focusing on deep sea, fly fishing, and shore fishing.

Methods

The study utilized surveys, questionnaires, economic analysis, stakeholder engagement, and comparative studies to gather data on participation, expenditures, and fishing preferences in Seychelles, analysing their economic impact, income retention, and local businesses.

The study highlights the economic impact of recreational fishing on Seychelles' tourism and fishing sectors, emphasizing the need for sustainable practices to balance economic benefits with resource preservation, thereby ensuring long-term sustainability.

Discussion:

The SFA is working on a sport and recreational fisheries management plan and reforming a steering committee to allow recreational fishers access to outer islands. A code of conduct is expected to be launched in 2025. Currently, there are no laws limiting recreational fishers, except for illegal and unlicensed gear and species associated with the Mahe Plateau co-management plan.

Policy Recommendations:

Development of a licensing system, a code of conduct, and stakeholder engagement in fishery management.

6. REVIEW OF THE ICCP, ITS MODE OF OPERATION AND MEMBERSHIP.

- **Meeting Structure:** Quarterly meetings chaired by the MoFBE.
- **Documentation:** Improved circulation of materials before meetings for transparency.
- **Membership Review:** Ensuring representative participation from key stakeholders, including enforcement agencies.
- **Key Concerns:** Low fisher attendance and absenteeism of committee members especially the Chair.

Discussion and Recommendations:

The Chair of SAS discussed high absenteeism due to stock level data shortage and proposed an allowance for fishermen to attend ICCP meeting, which will be discussed with SFA management.

7. Work plan for 2025.

The document outlines the planned activities for the Implementation Committee for the Mahe Plateau Trap and Line Fishery Co-Management Plan (ICCP) and the Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) in 2025.

Key Highlights:

- The ICCP and SAS meetings will focus on 2024 recommendations, finfish market opportunities, co-management plan transition, fisheries licensing framework, and 2026 workplan adoption. The main objectives include promoting Mahe Plateau finfish products, evaluating co-management plans, strengthening licensing frameworks, and reviewing ICCP's operational approach. The expected outcomes include enhanced stakeholder collaboration and sustainable fisheries management.

Appendix 4 provides a detailed schedule for ICCP and SAS meetings.

Discussions:

The chair proposed reviewing guitar fish and ray species regulations, assessing SFA's progress on trap tagging, and moving licensing framework to the first meeting in March. The vice-chair should be two-year-term and re-elected during the first meeting. Members should be reminded of their attendance, as the committee may terminate appointments if they miss two consecutive meetings.

A.O. B

- **Next Meeting**

The 27th ICCP meeting will be held on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at a venue to be confirmed.

Appendix 1

Agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

International Conference Centre Seychelles
(ICCS), Victoria, Mahe

Thursday 28 November 2024: 1000-
1400 Hrs

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening to the Meeting

Remarks by the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy (MoFBE)

2. Adoption of the agenda

To be moved by the Chairperson.

3. Developments since the last meeting

The ICCP will be briefed on the developments since the 25th ICCP meeting (14th September 2024) including continuing fisher communications and other relevant matters from SFA and from the Secretariat.

4. MCS monitoring and compliance to the Fisheries Regulations 2021.

The SFA MCS Section will update the meeting on the results of patrols and enforcement actions undertaken since its last report to the 25th ICCP.

5. Assessment of the Economic and Social Importance of Seychelles' Sport and Recreational Fishery.

The SWIOFISH3 Project, through Advance Africa, assessed Seychelles' recreational fishery's economic and social value, revealing that it attracts tourists and residents, contributes to the economy, and creates jobs. Non-resident fishers make the largest economic contributions. The results of the study will be presented to the ICCP for review.

6. Review of the ICCP, its mode of operation and membership.

The work undertaken by the Implementation Committee of the Co-management Plan for the year will be reviewed and assess including its mode of operational framework, effectiveness, and membership to identify areas for improvement.

7. Work plan for 2025

8. Other matters.

9. Date and place of the next meeting.

Appendix 2

List of Documents circulated in advance of the meeting.

Working documents

ICCP26/WD/1. Agenda.

ICCP26/WD/2. Developments since the last meeting.

ICCP26/WD/3. MCS Monitoring and compliance to the Fisheries Regulations 2021

ICCP26 /WD/4. Contributions of the Seychelles Recreational Fisheries to the economy and society.

ICCP26/WD/5. Review of the ICCP, its mode of operation and membership.

ICCP26/WD/6. Work plan for 2025.

Information documents

ICCP26/ID/1. List of Documents

ICCP26/ID/2 Minutes of the 25th ICCP meeting of 18th July 2024

Appendix 3

List of Participants

Members, other Stakeholders and Secretariat

Members	
Rodney Nicole	Bel Ombre Fishermen Association
Darell Green	Praslin Fishermen Association
Nancy Ramkalawan-Onginjo	Seychelles Fishermen and Boat Owner Association (SFBOA)
Faizal Suleman	Recreational Fisher Representative
Terrence Labrosse, Neddy Labrosse	Roche Caiman Fishers Association
Jan Robinson	Seychelles Fisheries Authority (SFA)
Roy Clarisse	Department of Fisheries (MOFBE)
Other Stakeholders / Observers	
Francis Songoire	Seychelles Police Force
Andrew Sinon	Seychelles Marine police
Secretariat	
Elisa Radegonde	Assistant-Manager, Resource Management (SFA)
Alison Hoareau	Fisheries Officer, Resource Management (SFA)
Daniel Bristol	Fisheries Officer, Resource Management (SFA)
Stephanie Hollanda	Principal Fisheries Scientist, Research (SFA)
Betty Victor	Senior Technical Coordinator, Technical Coordination Unit (SFA)
Claire Pierre- louis	Senior Statistical officer, Fisheries Statistics & Economics
Emilie Augustin	Senior Statistical officer, Fisheries Statistics & Economics
Isha Cooposamy	Assistant Manager License, Monitoring Control and Surveillance (SFA)
Sharif Antoine	Senior Economist, Statistics & Fisheries Economics Department (SFA)
Barbara Hoareau	Senior Liaison Officer (SFA)
Rodney Govinden	Head of Department, Fisheries Research
Roddy Allisop	Head of Department, Monitoring Control and Surveillance (SFA)
Stephanie Radegonde	Principal Policy Analyst, Department of Fisheries
Aubrey Harris	SFA Board Member
Absent with excuse	
Ray Payet	

Phillippe Michaud	Consultant, (MOFBE)
Absent	
Mervin Dugasse	Seychelles Sports Fishing Clubs (SSFC)
Jean- Claude Hoareau	Fishtech
Shantilal Dhanjee	Hire Craft (Fishing) Representative
Kevin Moumou	Min of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment (MACCE)
Representative of	Green Island Foundation (GIF)

Appendix 4: Workplan of the ICCP and SAS proposed for 2025

WORKPLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2025												
Months	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Week	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25
27th ICCP Meeting: Follow-up, working group formation, consultancy recruitment, Phase II decision			■	■								
SAS9 Meeting: Review of performance management system				■	■							
28th ICCP Meeting: Working group report, Phase I evaluation results, SAS progress						■	■					
29th ICCP Meeting: Licensing framework update, industry engagement, Phase II measures adoption									■	■		
SAS10 Meeting: Stock assessment and fisheries management issues										■	■	
30th ICCP Meeting: SAS recommendations, ICCP review, and 2026 plan approval											■	■
■ Launch of call for ICCP Meeting ■ ICCP Meeting ■ Launch of call for SAS Meeting ■ SAS Meeting												

