



SFS/DM/SWIOFC/19/6 E

SOUTHWEST INDIAN OCEAN FISHERIES COMMISSION

Tenth Session

Maldives, 1 to 3 October 2019

MATTERS REGARDING THE EAF NANSEN PROGRAMME: REPORT OF THE REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE IN THE SOUTHWEST INDIAN OCEAN

The EAF-Nansen Programme Coordinator, Ms. Merete Tandstad, reported to the Programme's Regional Steering Committee for the Southwest Indian Ocean on the progress of activities since the last Commission meeting in 2018 and introduced elements of the Programme workplan up to 2021. Some cross-cutting activities and products of relevance to SWIOFC were also highlighted, such as the Programme strategies on gender, communication, capacity development and the EAF-Nansen Programme Data Policy.

Member Countries appreciated the progress of work carried out during the period under review in support of the three Outcomes of the Programme (i) research/science; (ii) fisheries management and (iii) capacity development. They also took note and supported the upcoming activities in 2019.

The Research Vessel (R/V) "*Dr Fridtjof Nansen*" carried out a series of surveys in the Southwest Indian Ocean in 2018, and in 2018 and 2019 four post-survey meetings for the different survey legs of relevance to the SWIOFC region were organized with the aim to agree on elements to be presented in survey reports, assign responsibilities and set a timeline for the finalization of the reports as well as for sample processing and data analysis, and to discuss and agree upon research proposals to be included in the science plan. Member countries recognised the importance of the research vessel in collecting data in support of fisheries management and drew the attention to the importance of assisting the countries in data analysis, capacity development and use of the information to support sustainable fisheries management

The SWIOFC country representatives also drew the attention of the Programme to the need to strengthen the national institutions to implement the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) at national level and to develop capacities to apply the EAF implementation monitoring tool. It was suggested to take advantage of the upcoming Nansen Programme Forum in November 2019 to share country experiences in the application of EAF. This would also be a good occasion to come up with suggestions for the continuation of the Programme after 2021.

Finally, it was requested that the Programme includes the elements put forward during the meeting in the 2020-21 work plan for the SWIO region. The Steering Committee was informed that the research vessel may return to the Southwest Indian Ocean in 2021 and countries were encouraged to actively contribute to the discussions on necessary research associated to the Programme's Science Plan that may require or benefit from the research surveys.