



Government of the Cook Islands
MINISTRY OF MARINE RESOURCES

**2nd Meeting of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project Steering Committee
7 - 9 February 2017**

Meeting Report

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From 7-9 February I attended the ABNJ DSP Steering Committee (PSC) meeting representing SPRFMO along with Dr Jianye Tang of China. Dr Tang has already submitted a report and this report can be read in conjunction with Dr Tang's report. I presented for SPRFMO for the Partner activities update in cooperation with Dr Tang.

Jon Lansley (SIOFA) was elected as Chair of the meeting and the agenda was adopted.

The meeting heard a presentation from the Common Oceans Program. Salient to that presentation was the governance of ANBJ for global conservation and sustainable use under the Common Oceans Policy, which will include a review of Area Based Planning (ABP) Tools to understand if they can be adapted for use beyond national jurisdiction, or whether existing tools are applicable to ABNJ. The ABP is to be piloted in the SE Pacific and the Western Indian Ocean, beginning with a capacity assessment, leading into and ABNJ dataset, then capacity development for the application of ABP through policy advice and scenario development.

Much of the meeting was routine in nature, especially the discussion of different aspects of the 2017 work plan step by step through each output with a total of 98 targets, reviewing progress and available funding to move targets forward.

During the meeting Gilles Hosch broached the idea of scoping visits for market-based options and value chain analysis, including Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS), in Deep Sea Fisheries under ABNJ DSP. Communication with SPRFMO highlighted that SPRFMO is not currently planning the introduction of a CDS but Gilles Hosch is still intending to make a preliminary visit to Wellington to promote work being done on value chain analysis at the RFMO level. This is one of four major project activities this year, the other three being projects in 'Rights Based Management', 'Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS)' and SmartForms.`

The main points taken from the Rights Based Management presentation were that a TAC or TAE is needed to reduce overcapacity and overfishing; and that Allocation of Rights is not necessarily an allocation of private rights to the resource.

The Presentation on SmartForms showed that fisheries intel can be generated with photos using a SmartForms app on a handheld device such as a smartphone. There is also potential to develop port inspection and other types of documentation templates with the app technology on offer from SmartForms.

There was also a presentation on the implementation of the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries (GCP/GLO/323/NOR) under UNGA Resolution 71/123 Section X Paragraph 171 – 192 to fully implement previous resolutions. FAO are currently reviewing their guidelines and will host a workshop in 2018 to update on the previous Busan Workshop. While the 2016 UN DOALOS Review of Bottom Fisheries focused on fishing activity impacting VMEs, human activity other than fishing is now also under consideration, for example Climate Change and pollution in the oceans, and this is a new development. A further UN review is scheduled for 2020.

The Meeting concluded with a series of draft recommendations, agreements and endorsements agreed to by the Steering Committee. At the date of writing this report we are still waiting for the final recommendations, agreements and endorsements to be received from FAO. The PSC agreed in principle to the 2017 work plan as tabled with changes discussed in plenary, subject to final endorsement when the PSC2 report is adopted. PSC noted the remains as per the Project Document, and requested a budget revision for PS3.

PSC agreed to hold its third meeting from 6-8 February 2018 at UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, England.

ENDS

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