

SEAFO lift off was successful and exploration of main issue continue.

Windhoek, Namibia -The South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation held its seventh Annual Meeting from the 11th to the 15th of October, 2010. The meeting focused on continuing to strengthen its fisheries management regime and to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).

Status of SEAFO participation

SEAFO was established in March 2004 after the entry into force of the SEAFO Convention in 2003. Angola, the European Community, Namibia, Norway, South Africa and Japan are currently members. Japan has become the 6th member in January 2010. SEAFO reaffirms its calls on other states, particularly those that have vessels currently fishing in the Convention Area, to join the Organisation as a matter of priority.

SEAFO establishes precautionary stock measures for 2010

Based on recommendations by the SEAFO Scientific Committee, SEAFO approved a precautionary TAC of Patagonian toothfish of 230 tonne and maintained the status quo for orange roughy (50 tonne), Alfonsino (200 tonnes) and deep sea red crab remain at 200 tonnes for B1 and 200 tonnes for the remainder of the SEAFO Convention Area for 2011 and 2012.

SEAFO finalized performance review of the organisation.

In response to international calls for Regional Fisheries Management Organisations to undertake performance reviews, SEAFO has agreed upon terms of reference, assessment criteria and composition of a panel to review the functioning of the Organization. The panel consisted of two external experts and two internal experts. The panel undertook its work intersessionally and reported back to the Commission during the 7th Annual meeting.

SEAFO is consistent with other RFMO's and the recommendations from the panel is in line with that for other RFMOS's. The Commission has prioritised the recommendations and will addresses it accordingly.

SEAFO closes new Area's in the Convention Area.

The Commission has adopted the closure of 11 areas per recommendation of the Scientific Committee. The objective is to protect seamounts with Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems. Some of the previous closed areas are redefined and new areas in the Mid Atlantic ridges have been closed.

SEAFO addresses ghost fishing in the Convention Area

Noting that the United Nations General Assembly has called on action to address the issue of ghost fishing or lost fishing gear, SEAFO has adopted a Conservation Measure to address the retrieval of lost fix gear. This measure will protect marine life in the international waters of the South East Atlantic against effects of ghost fishing.

SEAFO agrees to further work to define its fishing footprint.

SEAFO is in the process of establishing officially mapped areas in the SEAFO Convention Area where bottom fishing has historically occurred. This "footprint" distinguishes between existing and new fishing areas. In addition, further work has been tasked by the Commission to gather all available data to complete the fishing footprint. This reconfirms SEAFO's commitment to protect vulnerable marine habitats and species.

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