



MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND  
AGRICULTURE

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FISHERIES COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN

November 2019

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## **I. VISION**

The vision of the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture is to have “a resilient and sustainable fisheries, forestry and agricultural sector that enhances food and nutrition security, contributes to socio-economic development and respects the natural environment.”

## **II. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

The Fisheries Comprehensive Plan is a document developed to guide the future actions and spearhead the development for the fisheries sector for the next three years. It presents a vision for the future with goals and objectives for all fisheries related activities.

## **III. SETTING PRIORITIES**

The challenges face by the fisheries sector have been exacerbated, especially by issues relating but not limited to capacity control, lack of operational resource management plans, abuse of concessions and subsidies, availability and reliability of employment, and a lack of safety measures. With the Government’s new approach towards sustainable fishing development the way for private sector-led growth and investment, it is imperative that all stakeholders involved make their specific contribution.

## **IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following principles will be promoted:

1. A shared partnership approach that will create smart partnerships at all levels (national and organisational), where Government still provides policy leadership. This partnership should encompass individuals, groups, communities, civil society, the private sector, local and central Government, as part of an overall participatory approach;
2. Nurturing a stronger job-creation and entrepreneurial culture;
3. Valuing the contributions that the sector is making to the economy, and;
4. Enforcing security and safety at sea

## **V. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

This Comprehensive Plan covers a wide spectrum of activities overlapping those of other Ministries and institutions not necessarily affiliated with the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture. As such, it requires great collaboration, but most importantly, financial resources to implement the policy. While the responsibility to finance the implementation generally rests with the Government, most of the interventions could also be materialised with support of our stakeholders.

## **A. CAPTURE FISHERIES**

### **1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The local fisheries sector of the Seychelles comprises of two distinct sub-sectors, namely:

- The artisanal sub-sector, which is exclusively reserved and practiced by Seychellois fishermen and targets demersal and pelagic species, and;
- The semi-industrial sub-sector, which comprises of locally-owned longline vessels under 24 metres targeting tuna and tuna-like species as well as vessels licensed for harvesting Sea Cucumber.

#### **1.1 ARTISANAL FISHERY**

The artisanal fishery comprises all domestic fisheries, including boats ranging in length from 4 to 15 m. The main gears used by the artisanal fishing fleet include hook and line, drop-lines, traps and nets that are used to catch a diverse array of demersal and pelagic fish species.

The fishery is limited to the Mahé Plateau from the littoral zone to the edges of the plateau, an area of around 41,000 km<sup>2</sup> and operates from Mahé, Praslin and La Digue. More recently the schooner fishery has expanded to the Amirantes Group of islands which is 12 nautical miles from the closest point off Mahé Plateau and 112 nautical miles from the Victoria fishing port.

Between the period of 1993 to 2018 there was a significant increase in efforts in the hook and line fishery. In 1993 there were 399 boats and by 2018 there were 776 boats comprising mainly of outboard engine boats, whalers, and schooners. During the same period, there was a significant increase in the number of small commercially active outboard vessels from 218 to 486, respectively. However, even with the greater fishing efficiency of whalers and schooners the catches over the period 1993 to 2016 have dropped significantly from around 5,000 MT to 2,500 MT per annum (SFA, 2016).

Table 1: Time series of catch statistics for the Artisanal fishery by vessel type

Month	Fishermen on foot	Pirogue	Outboard	Whaler	Schooner	Semi-industrial long liners	Total Catch (MT)
2006	23.4	81.8	1086.7	2188.4	464.0	0.7	<b>3845.0</b>
2007	14.9	26.2	1045.4	2648.5	436.2	24.4	<b>4195.6</b>
2008	37.9	28.9	1214.2	3068.5	426.2	2.2	<b>4777.8</b>
2009	20.2	33.9	1134.2	1436.3	403.8	2.2	<b>3030.6</b>
2010	14.4	16.0	880.0	1240.8	444.2	1.2	<b>2596.6</b>
2011	10.1	15.2	949.5	1486.3	386.0	23.9	<b>2871.0</b>
2012	13.2	24.2	1268.2	770.3	405.0	25.6	<b>2506.4</b>
2013	10.8	43.7	1521.7	2140.1	379.8	54.2	<b>4150.4</b>
2014	5.8	56.6	1460.2	1459.2	520.6	130.0	<b>3632.5</b>
2015	2.6	20.5	1450.3	1293.3	270.0	177.5	<b>3214.2</b>
2016	2.9	12.9	1309.4	958.7	223.2	8.7	<b>2515.8</b>
2017	0.0	0.0	2469.5	1319.5	357.8	64.0	<b>4210.8</b>

Source: SFA Fisheries Statistical Report (2017)

## 1.2 SEMI-INDUSTRIAL FISHERY

### a. Longline

The semi-industrial longline fishery started in 1995 and comprises medium-size vessels ranging from 14 to 23 metres in length. Their main target species are broadbill swordfish, big eye and yellowfin tuna with marlin and sharks as the primary bycatch. In 2018 there were 41 locally-owned vessels, amounting to an average total capacity of 1,600 gross tonnage. The number of vessels in 2018 shows a 73% increase over 2015 (11 vessels). The fishery operates from the edge off the Mahé Plateau (for some species) and also on the high seas.

The highest recorded catch from the semi-industrial fishery was in 2018 which amounted to 1228.8 MT. A majority of the catches from this fishery are exported, except for a small proportion of line fish and tuna. Contrary to the industrial fishery, the semi-industrial longline fishery is a comparatively small fishery. However, it has substantial capacity for growth. The fishery has previously experienced a decline in catch and export of swordfish to the EU due to a ‘red alert’ as a result of high cadmium and mercury levels in 2003 and 2013 respectively. In 2014, the alert on swordfish was lifted and this has re-opened the EU market (Robinson *et al.* 2015 and SFA Annual Report, 2013).

### b. Sea cucumber

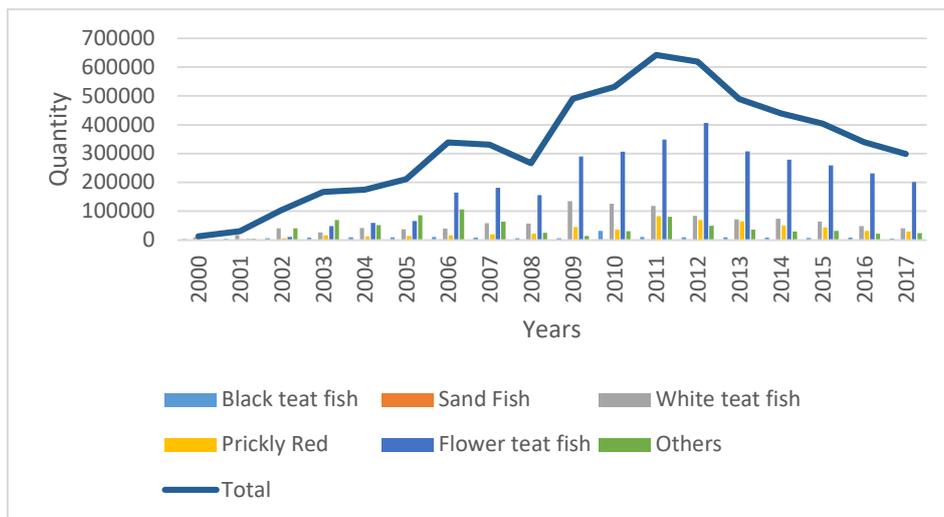
The sea cucumber fishery is one of the recent fisheries which began in the early 1980’s. The fishery experienced a rapid development and by 1999 there were already signs of stock depletion, including lower volumes of high value species and fishermen having to travel further

and dive deeper to maintain catch rates, and concerns were raised regarding the sustainability of the fishery. The Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA) implemented some management measures in 1999 in response to local depletion of some species.

Currently there are 25 licenses to harvest and 4 licenses to process sea cucumber. The vessels operating in the fishery is composed of 8 crew members per vessel with 4 divers, 1 cook, 1 skipper, 1 boat boy and 1 apprentice. The fishing season for sea cucumber runs for 8 months, from October to May. Previously, there were no limits on catch and the specie composition. However, in 2017 the SFA introduced a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for each specie and consequently, fishermen are only allowed to catch 3 species, namely flower teat fish, white teat fish and prickly red.

According to catch data depicted by figure 1, the dominant exploited species are the flower teat fish followed by the white teat fish and prickly red.

Figure 1: Catch data for the period 2000-2017



Source: SFA (2017)

From the diagram above, the sea cucumber fishery recorded its highest catch of 642,404 pieces in 2011. The figure also shows that harvesting of flower teat fish has increased over the years, reaching its peak in 2012 with a total of 406,285 pieces. As from 2012, there has been a decline in the catch data recorded for sea cucumber.

The above mentioned fisheries are faced with several challenges, and this Comprehensive Plan will aim to address these challenges. The contents to follow will include an overview of the current situation with regards to the classification of vessels, registration and safety, fishing license, concession, monitoring, control and surveillance, industrial fishing, bycatch, associations, satellite account, insurance, access to finance, legislation, employment, processing, aquaculture, infrastructural projects, and the setting up of the new company. Thereafter, it shall list several actions to be undertaken in order to address these issues.

## 2. CLASSIFICATION OF VESSELS

### Present Situation

The artisanal and semi-industrial sub-sectors uses a number of different boat types of different characteristics and requirements as illustrated in the table below.

Table 2: Current Vessel Classification

VESSEL TYPE	LENGTH IN M	ENGINE	TYPICAL FISHING RANGE/DISTANCE	DECK-TYPE	MATERIAL	CREW	LENGTH OF TRIP	EQUIPMENT (NAVIGATION/COMMUNICATION) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Pirogue</b>	4-8	None	1-2 miles	Open	Wooden	1-2	2-5 hours	None
<b>Open boat</b>	5-7	24-40 hp	3-25 miles (inshore)	Open	Fiberglass	2-3	Day trips	None
<b>Lekonomi</b>	6-8	1-2 Cylinder (13-26 hp)	40-70 miles	Semi-deck	Fiberglass	2-3	3-4 days	GPS, echo-sounder, AM radio, VMS
<b>Whaler</b>	6-12	2 - 3 Cylinder (26-44 hp)	Up to edge of Mahe plateau 70-120 miles	Open for day-trips, some semi-covered	Wooden or fiberglass	6-8	Open deck 1 day, semi-covered 6-8 days	AM radio, VHF, GPS, VMS
<b>Lavenir</b>	9-10	3 Cylinder (36 hp)	Up to edge of Mahe plateau 70-120 miles	Decked	Wooden	3-4	6-8 days	GPS, Compass, Echo-sounder, VMS
<b>Schooner</b>	10-15	3-4 Cylinder (-55hp)	70-150 miles	Decked	Fiberglass (some wooden)	6-7	8 days	VHF, GPS, Compass, VMS
<b>Semi-industrial Longliner</b>	16-24	4-12 Cylinder (316 hp)	Beyond the edge of Mahe plateau and 100 miles beyond the EEZ	Decked	Fiberglass	6-10	2-3 weeks	AM radio, VHF, GPS, VMS, Satellite-phone, echo-sounder

Adapted: Nageon de Lestang, J (2006)

The table below presents statistics for the number of vessels in the artisanal and semi-industrial longline fishery extracted from SFA datasets and the Boat-Frame Survey undertaken in 2017.

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that not all vessels will be equipped with all the navigation or communication equipment's under their respective classifications.

Table 3: Number of vessels vs. licenses issued in the artisanal and semi-industrial longline fishery

Vessel Type	CAS 2017	Boat Frame 2017 <sup>2</sup>	CAS 2018	No. of license 2017	No. of license 2018
<b>Outboard</b>	540	312	486	445	444
<b>Pirogue</b>	2		2	2	2
<b>Schooner</b>	80	76	86	88	80
<b>Semi-Industrial Longliner</b>	38	33	41	41	41
<b>Unknown</b>	68	157	58	43	58
<b>Whaler</b>	106	94	102	34	27
<b>Others<sup>3</sup></b>		70	1		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>652</b>

Source: SFA (2018)

The data presented indicates discrepancies in the statistics of the number of fishing vessels that are licensed in this sub-sector. The unknown vessels recorded by the SFA Catch Assessment Survey (CAS) and the Boat Frame Survey comprises mostly of vessel type Lekonomi and Lavenir.

These discrepancies in classification or misclassification have led to limited understanding of local resource use per category, and inadequate management and control of the vessels. This is indicative of a complete disorganisation of vessel classification in terms of types. As a result, there is no proper control, including safety operational range.<sup>4</sup>

Even the existing vessel markings (SZ Number) is limited in terms of classification and identification of vessels and fisheries involved. Reliance on the SZ number only has led to the difficulty of identifying whether a vessel is authorised to fish in certain areas and in terms of safety it does not indicate the operating range of the vessel. Currently, there is no standard for the marking of the SZ in terms of vessel size and colour of markings. This has led to a need to review the current marking system to be in line with the new vessel classification system and safety measures.

As a result, the revised classification system will provide a better understanding of local resource use and mitigate management issues and enhance control of the vessels. The new classification of vessels will facilitate the following processes:

- Vessel registration;

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<sup>2</sup> MRAG study in 2017

<sup>3</sup> Hirecraft, Sports fishing

<sup>4</sup> Boatframe survey 2017

- License application;
- Vessel marking;
- Safety measures;
- Management of concessions, and;
- Management of the fishery.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

- SFA and SMSA shall devise and implement a new vessel classification system based on the specification of vessels to reflect local requirements and maintain our international obligations, mainly with the FAO and IMO upon the entry in to force of the SMSA Act. This objective will require amendment to the legislative framework.
- Under the new classification, all vessels will fall under the small-scale fisheries which will be classed as outboard and inboard. Based on the new classification, small-scale fisheries will be defined in the Fisheries Act, as per below;

*“Small-scale fisheries mean a fishery using vessels less than 24 metres in length overall carrying out fishing activities within the Seychelles territorial waters<sup>5</sup> and EEZ<sup>6</sup> and to a lesser extent on the high seas.”*

- For the purposes of more targeted development and management measures for the local fishery, the small-scale fishing vessels are broken down into five classes as stipulated in the table below and shall be reflected in the Fisheries Regulation:

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<sup>5</sup> Territorial waters refers to the 12 nautical miles from the nearest point of the baseline (low-watermark).

<sup>6</sup> EEZ areas beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, having, as their seaward limit, a line measured seaward every point of which is a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baseline from the nearest point on the baselines.

Table 4: Classification of small-scale fishing vessels

CLASS	CLASS 1	CLASS 2	CLASS 3	CLASS 4	CLASS 5
<b>Sub-Class</b>	Small Outboard	Large Outboard	Small Inboard	Medium Inboard	Large Inboard
<b>Length Overall (metres)</b>	Less than 6.00	6.00 - 12.00	Less than 12.00	12.00 - 18.00	Greater than 18.00 Less than 24 metres
<b>Type of vessels</b>	Mini Mahe/Extended Mini Mahe	Extended Mini mahe/Super mini mahe/ trankil/Cerf 180/Bertram/ Catamaran	Lavenir/ Whalers /Lekonomi/ Schooners	Schooners/ Semi-industrial	Schooners/ Semi-industrial Longliners
<b>Maximum Operational Range<sup>7</sup></b>	40 Nautical <sup>8</sup>	70 Nautical	120 Nautical Miles	150 Nautical Miles	EEZ and beyond
<b>Permitted Activities Subject to license activity<sup>9</sup></b>					
Trap	✓	✓	✓		
Handline	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Octopus	✓	✓			
Beach Seine	✓	✓			
Lobsters	✓	✓	✓		
Dropline			✓	✓	✓
Spanner Crabs			✓	✓	✓
Sea Cucumber			✓	✓	✓
Deep water shrimp				✓	✓
Longline Tuna and Tuna-like Species				✓	✓

Classes 1, 2 and 3 will have as primary target non-tuna species within the Seychelles territorial waters and EEZ practiced by Seychellois citizens. Whilst classes 4 and 5 will have as primary targets:

- Species within the Mahe Plateau<sup>10</sup> and distant fishing banks depending on specific license, on the drop-off and tuna and tuna like species within the Seychelles EEZ and to lesser extent on the high seas. But, it will be compulsory to obtain an authorisation to fish outside the Seychelles EEZ;
- Sea cucumber within the Seychelles EEZ including the Mahe Plateau.

<sup>7</sup> From operating base

<sup>8</sup> with the exception of Pirogue 8 nautical miles max

<sup>9</sup> All commercial fishing activities will require a licence.

<sup>10</sup> Mahe Plateau Coordinate: Zone 1: Comprising an area around Mahe Island and Seychelles Bank with the boundary running as follows:

From Point 1 (Latitude 5°22.0'S and Longitude 57°23.0'E) to Point 2 (Latitude 3°40.0'S and Longitude 56°06.9'E) to Point 3 (Latitude 3°30.0'S and Longitude 55°11.0'E) to Point 4 (Latitude 3°55.0' S and Longitude 54°23.0'E) to Point 5 (Latitude 4°44.0'S and Longitude 53°47.0'E) to point 6 (Latitude 5°38.0'S and Longitude 56°08.0'E) to point 7 (Latitude 6°34.04'S and Longitude 56°02.0'E) to Point 8 (Latitude 6°34.0'S and Longitude 56°23.0'E) and back to Point 1, the Point of commencement

## **New marking scheme and identification of vessels**

As an aid to fisheries management and safety at sea, fishing vessels would be appropriately marked for their identification. Vessels shall be clearly marked according to United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) guidelines for the marking and identification of fishing vessels (Annex 1). The guideline also addresses the size (in accordance with the length of the vessel), colour painting, spacing, location of the marking etc.

In terms of vessels marking and identification there will be a clear distinction between commercial fishing vessels and a non-commercial fishing vessels.

## **Coding system**

The coding system applicable for commercial fishing vessels will be as follows:

- **SZ Number** - Seychelles 2028;<sup>11</sup>
- **Island** - 01-Mahe, 02-Praslin, 03- La Digue, 04-Silhouette, 05-Other Inner Islands, 06-Outer Islands (will indicated the island from which the vessel operates from);
- **Class**- 1-Class 1, 2- Class 2, 3- Class 3, 4- Class 4, 5- Class 5 (Class will indicate the maximum operating range, permitted or licensed fishing activities, geo-fencing per class on VMS system and also the required safety equipment on-board);
- **Licensee Number**- 8682 (will indicate a unique licensee number – limited to 4 digits)
- Black marking with a white background as illustrated below.

**SZ2028-01-1-8682**

The coding system applicable for non-commercial fishing vessels will be as follows:

- **HC Number or RC Number**– Hire Craft 2028 or Recreational 2032
- **Island** - 01-Mahe, 02-Praslin, 03- La Digue, 04-Silhouette, 05-Other Inner Islands, 06-Outer Islands;
- **Permit Number**- P8682;
- White marking with a Black background as illustrated below.

**HC2028-01-P8682**

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<sup>11</sup> First two digit is the year of registration and the next two is the sequence of registration in a given year.

### 3. REGISTRATION AND SAFETY OF VESSELS

#### Present Situation

The Merchant Shipping Act 1995 makes provision for registration of ships<sup>12</sup> (including fishing vessels). The Seychelles Maritime Safety Administration (SMSA) is currently not registering local fishing vessels operating exclusively in the EEZ. In addition, there is no fisheries legislation controlling the inspection and enforcement of safety measures for local fishing vessels. However, similar provisions exist in the Merchant Shipping Act and is strictly enforced for passenger vessels, hire crafts, sport fishing vessels, pleasure crafts, cargo vessels and industrial fishing vessels, albeit it is the regulatory and supervisory authority responsible to ensure that all mariners, without exception use and enjoy our seas and water bodies in a safe and lawful manner. This implies that there are no control, record, information, no sea worthiness and safety inspections and no basis for the need of insurance on fishing vessels.

However, the SFA maintains a list of all licensed fishing vessels, boat owners and fishermen. According to the 2017 boat frame survey, a total of 1,115 boats were counted of which 742 were commercial fishing boat, 168 hire crafts (sport fishing) and 116 recreational boats. The 2017 Survey covered more commercial fishing vessels than the number considered active and licensed by the SFA, (742 compared to 653 licensed and 550 active).license

In view that SMSA is not registering fishing vessels, this implies that there is no need to carry out sea worthiness survey. In addition, the operating range is not regulated. Furthermore, fishing vessels are not adequately equipped with the necessary safety equipment and this has resulted to several avoidable incidents at sea. The table below illustrates the number of incidents involving the local fishing vessels.

Table 5: Marine Casualties and search & rescue operations recorded by the Seychelles Coast Guard

YEAR	NUMBER OF CASUALTIES
2015	30
2016	50
2017	24
2018	47
2019 (up to May)	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>170</b>

<sup>12</sup> Excluding those less than 10 metres

The Government recognise that not all fishermen have the knowledge of the required distance they need to safely operate their vessel, whilst others needs to be equipped and trained to use navigational and communication equipment.

#### **New procedure for registration of fishing vessels**

- All local fishing vessels will be identified and registered by SMSA as per its mandate by first quarter of 2020, in collaboration with SFA;
- SMSA shall register vessel owners including beneficial owners of all fishing vessels based in Seychelles;
- New local fishing vessels shall be subjected to the Anti-Money Laundering Act;
- All local fishing vessels shall be subjected to mandatory survey in order for SMSA to issue the Sea Worthiness and Safety Certificates (ensuring all guidelines have been followed including SBS requirements);
- Vessels owners shall declare financial institutions having interest in the vessel;
- The Sea Worthiness and Safety certificate should be submitted to the SFA when applying for a fishing boat license.

#### **Actions to be undertaken by SFA and SMSA**

- SMSA will amend its Act in order for them to accommodate fishing vessels;
- SMSA in collaboration with SFA will develop a database for fishing vessels by first quarter of 2020;
- SMSA in collaboration with SFA will develop an application form for registration of fishing vessels, by the end of 2019;
- Effective first quarter of 2020, all masters and skippers of fishing vessels will need to have valid licenses for applicable operating ranges as per the fishing vessel classification at all times;
- SFA will establish an accreditation system through SMSA for masters and skippers by first quarter of 2020.

#### **New procedure for the transfer of ownership of fishing vessels**

In the event of transfer of ownership of vessels the following procedure must be adhered to:

- A request must be made to the SFA for surrendering of the fishing vessel license;
- SFA will inform financial institutions which have interest in the asset;

- The SFA will then issue a Revocation License Certificate to the boat owner;
- In the event where the license has lapsed an authorization will still need to be issued by SFA;
- SMSA will only deregister the vessel upon receipt of the revocation license certificate from SFA.

### **Safety**

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 77(1), part (i) and (j) of the Seychelles Fisheries Act, 2014, the Ministry responsible for fisheries may in consultation with SMSA make regulations to ensure the safety and security of fishermen at sea and fishing vessels.

Safety and security requirements to be adhered to by small-scale fishing vessels will be regulated as per the table below. It shall be mandatory for all small-scale fishing vessels to be equipped with the following safety equipment as per their respective vessel classification.

Table 6: Safety and Security Requirements for Small-scale Fishing Vessels

SAFETY MEASURES	CLASS 1	CLASS 2	CLASS 3	CLASS 4	CLASS 5
<b>Length Overall (metres)</b>	Less than 6.00	6.00 - 12.00	Less than 12.00	12.00 - 18.00	Greater than 18.00 Less than 24 metres
<b>Maximum Operating Range</b>	30 Nautical Miles	70 Nautical Miles	120 Nautical Miles	150 Nautical Miles	EEZ and beyond
<b>Competency of Skipper</b>	Skipper license certificate Class 1	Skipper license certificate Class 2	Skipper license certificate Class 3	Skipper license certificate Class 4	Skipper license certificate Class 5
<b>Steering Gear (Back up)</b>	Oars/Paddles (2)	Oars/Paddles (2)			
<b>Steel Anchor and Suitable chain/Rope</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Spare Steel Anchor and Suitable chain/Rope</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Kill cord (engine safety cut out)</b>	✓	✓			
<b>Navigation Equipment</b>	Compass	Compass	Compass/Plotter	Plotter	Plotter
<b>Communication Equipment</b>	Mobile phone in a water proof pouch	Mobile phone in a water proof pouch and Handheld VHF	VHF/SSB	SSB/SAT. PHONE	SSB/SAT. PHONE
<b>Radar Reflector</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Tracking System</b>	Satellite/Radio	Satellite/Radio	Satellite/Radio	Satellite/Radio	Satellite/Radio
<b>Personal flotation device (approved life jackets for each person onboard)</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Throwable Flotation device (life-buoys with self-igniting light)</b>			✓	✓	✓
<b>Navigation Light</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Visual Distress Signal</b>	Mirror	Mirror Hand-held flares	Hand-held flares (4)	Hand-held flares (4)	Hand-held flares (4)
<b>Lighting</b>	Water proof Torch, Full set of Batteries (1) and Spare bulb (2)	Water proof Torch, Full set of Batteries (1) and Spare bulb (2)	Water proof Torch	Water proof Torch	Water proof Torch
<b>Sound Signal</b>	Whistle/ Bell	Whistle/ Bell	Air horn	Air horn	Air horn
<b>Emergency tool kit</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>First Aid Kit</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Fire Extinguisher Class A, B, C</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Bilge pump/ Bailer</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Minimum 1 litre of water for each persons on board</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 4. FISHING LICENSE

### Present Situation

SFA is the legal authority mandated to issue licenses for fishing and fishing related activities, as per Part III - Licensing Requirement of the 2014 Fisheries Act, excluding processing of fin fish.

Currently, licenses are being issued by SFA for the following in the local fisheries sector:

#### 4.1 LOCAL FISHING VESSEL

##### 4.1.1 Artisanal fishing

An extract of the existing license conditions are as follows:

- Allowed to fish all species, excluding those prohibited from being fished under the Fisheries Act and those requiring special authorizations under the fisheries law;
- Allowed to fish in Seychelles waters;
- The reporting requirement is as per Fisheries Act and Regulation;
- The VMS requirement is as per Fisheries Act and Regulation;
- Authorized to land in Seychelles ports only;
- For entitlement of fuel concession, VMS have to be operational throughout whole trips.
- The license is valid for a period of one year;
- The annual license fee is SCR 500.00.

##### 4.1.2 Semi-industrial longline fishing

License conditions are as follows:

- Allowed to fish tuna & tuna like species, excluding those prohibited from being fished under the Fisheries Act and those requiring special authorizations under the fisheries law;
- Allowed to fish in Seychelles waters;
- The reporting requirement is as per Fisheries Act and Regulation;
- The VMS requirement is as per Fisheries Act and Regulation;
- Authorized to land in Seychelles port only;
- For entitlement of fuel concession, VMS have to be operational throughout whole trips;

- The license is valid for a period of one year;
- The annual license fee is SCR 500.00.

## 4.2 FISHING LICENSE ACTIVITIES

### 4.2.1 Net fishing

Presently, there are two types of net fishing, namely, sardine and mackerel fishing. Their license conditions are as follows.

License conditions for sardine fishing are as follows:

- Allowed to use a nylon sardine net;
- The specification of the net must be as follows:
  - A length of 210/9 ply x 20mm;
  - A depth of 6 m;
  - A mesh size of 2.0 cm;
- The allowed manner of operation is restricted for use by boat only;
- Allowed to fish in designated areas as per the license condition;
- Daily operation is limited between 6 a.m. to 4 p.m.;
- The license is valid for a period of one year;
- The annual license fee is SCR 100.00.

License conditions for mackerel fishing are as follows:

- Allowed to use a nylon mackerel net;
- The specification of the net must be as follows:
  - A length of 168.0 m;
  - A depth of 4.12 m;
  - A mesh size of 4.0 cm;
- The allowed manner of operation is restricted for use by boat only;
- Allowed to fish in designated areas as per the license condition;
- Daily operation is limited between 6 a.m. to 4 p.m.;
- The license is valid for a period of one year;
- The annual license fee is SCR 100.00.

#### 4.2.2 Sea cucumber fishing

The management measures include:

- A licensing system of limited entry of 25 licenses for harvesting;
- A quota for sea cucumber harvesting of 375,000 pieces

The table below shows a breakdown of the quota allocation per specie, per vessel.

Table 7: Quota distribution

	<b>White Teat Fish</b>	<b>Prickly Red</b>	<b>Flower Teat Fish</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Quota Per Species</b>	56250	37500	281250	375000
<b>Quota Per Vessels (25 vessels)</b>	2250	1500	11250	15000

License conditions are as follows:

- Applicants shall be a citizen of Seychelles;
- The ‘Sea cucumber Fishing License’ is non-transferable;
- The boat shall have a valid 'Local fishing vessels' license and a valid ‘Sea cucumber Fishing’ license;
- Only three sea cucumber species, flower teat fish, white teat fish and prickly red are allowed to be harvested as per the allocated quota for each licensee;
- Maximum of 4 divers per fishing license;
- The license is valid for the fishing of sea cucumber during the open season which will be from 1st October to 31st May (8 Months);
- The license fee SCR 7,000.00.

#### 4.2.3 Sea cucumber processing

The management measures limits entry to 4 licenses to process sea cucumber.

Sea cucumber is currently a restricted managed fishery.

Present license conditions are as follows:

- Applicants shall be a citizen of Seychelles.
- An export permit shall be required to export sea cucumbers;
- At export, the levy payable is \$2 per kilo;

- At export, the consignment shall be jointly certified and sealed by the SFA and Customs Officers;
- The Processor or Export license holder shall be entitled to retain 50% of the foreign exchange earned from the exports. This money is to be held in a foreign exchange account in Seychelles;
- The processor shall keep records of their purchases, processed and exports of sea cucumbers;
- The operators shall duly complete the Purchase Receipt Book provided for any purchase of sea cucumbers;
- The processor shall permit regular checks of the records of their purchases, and processed sea cucumbers. During storage the verified and unverified sea cucumbers shall be kept in separate containers. Re-verification will take place prior to export;
- Stocks of sea cucumbers (wet and dried) shall only be kept at the premises as identified on the license;
- The Processor or Exporter shall only export dried sea cucumbers;
- Non-compliance to the above conditions may result in the license being revoked;
- The license is valid for a period of one year;
- The annual license fee is SCR 20,000.00.

#### 4.2.4 Lobster (homard) fishing

Present license conditions are as follows:

- A compliance bond of SCR 5,000.00 will be paid to SFA as a deposit prior to issuance of license;
- The licensee must declare their catch through a logbook every two weeks;
- All log books should be submitted to SFA within one week after closure of the lobster fishing season;
- The holder of the license shall not at any time fish for catch or kill homard in a protected area;
- The holder of the license shall not fish for, catch or kill homard which is less than 7.5 cm in length;
- The holder of the license shall not fish, catch, kill, sell or be in possession of a homard in the berried state;

- The license holder will provide access of fisheries technicians to all catches and all reasonable assistance in obtaining data;
- Provide the SFA with access to the receipt book for the sale of every lobster at the closure of the lobster season;
- Agree to be interviewed by SFA fisheries technicians as when the need arises;
- The license is valid for the fishing of lobster during the open season which will be determined by the SFA;
- The license fee SCR 500.00.

Apart from sea cucumber and lobster fisheries, all other fisheries are open access, meaning entry is not restricted. As a result there is no effective control over the entry of fishermen and extraction of resources, which may result in overcapacity in the fishery. This has been further aggravated with the illegal harvesting of fish resources on our shores by foreign workers. It is the aim of the fisheries administrators that all fishing activities be licensed and appropriately administered with informed management plan.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

- In the local fisheries sector all fishing vessels and fishing activities shall be licensed in accordance with the revised classification as per table 4, by first quarter of 2020;
- There shall be a clear distinction between a fishing vessel license and a fishing activity license or permit;
- A new licensing framework for fishing vessels and fishing activities will be set up, subject to specific conditions as per the fisheries management plan;
- Government together with the private sector will undertake an assessment with a view to modernize local fishing fleets involved in targeting of tuna and tuna-like species;
- The following actions will be undertaken for the harvesting and processing of sea cucumber:
  - i. Government will commission a study on the stock of sea cucumber effective 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020;
  - ii. During the study period, the sea cucumber harvesting season will close for one year;
  - iii. Government will consider new management measures based on outcome of the study, and;

- iv. Government will make a decision on the way licenses for harvesting and processing of sea cucumber is awarded, subsequent to the completion of the study.

### FISHING VESSEL LICENSE

Effective first quarter of 2020, commercial fishing vessels, shall be defined as follows:

*“A commercial fishing vessel, means a vessel, other than a sport fishing vessel that is commercially engaged in fishing for a minimum of 16 days per month during the northeast monsoon and 12 days during the southeast monsoon”*

Note that in the event a vessel ceases to meet the above definition, without valid reason, it will be declassified as a commercial fishing vessel. This will imply a revocation of license.

The procedure to issue a fishing vessel license shall be as follows:

- A request for fishing vessel license must be accompanied with a certificates of registration, sea worthiness and safety from the SMSA;
- Fishing vessel licenses will be classified according to their class;
- Fishing vessel licenses will not be issued unless the boat owners present their insurance certificate;
- After being issued a fishing vessel license, all commercial fishing vessels must apply for a fishing activity license, whilst, non-commercial fishing vessels must apply for a fishing permit.

### FISHING ACTIVITY LICENSE

In order for a local fishing activity license to be issued, the following procedures must be adhered to:

- A request for a fishing activity license must be accompanied with a valid fishing vessel license;
- Declaration of the type of fishing activity license being requested based on the classification of vessels;
- SFA will issue a fishing license based on activities as per the vessel classification.

Apart from the above listed fishing activities the following fishing activities will also require a license:

- Handline (exception on foot);
- Dropline;
- Spanner Crabs;
- Deep water shrimp;
- Trap (non-metallic);
- Octopus<sup>13</sup>, and;
- Any other gears or target species will require the approval of SFA.

### FISHING ACTIVITY PERMIT

In order for a local fishing activity permit to be issued the following procedures must be adhered to:

- A request for a fishing activity permit must be accompanied with a fishing vessel license;
- Declaration of the type of permit being requested based on the classification of vessels;
- SFA will issue a permit based on activities and gears as per the vessel classification.

The following fishing activities will require a permit:

- Recreational fishing;
- Pleasure fishing;
- Fly-fishing;
- Sports fishing.

The permit conditions applicable will be as follows:

- Any catch cannot be sold commercially or donated, except in the case of subsistence fishing. In the case of donation prior approval by SFA will be required within a specific framework;
- Catch and release;
- Bag limit will be determined by SFA will be linked to personal consumption;
- All exports will need to be certified by SBS for phytosanitary purposes regardless of whether the country requires an import certificate;
- Non-commercial exports will be limited to 20kg per person, through regulation.

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<sup>13</sup> Commission a study - conduct a stock assessment for the local octopus fishery

VISITORS AND RESIDENTS ON A GOP

All visitors and residents on a GOP, will not be allowed to engage in subsistence fishing activities.

## 5. CONCESSIONS

This section makes reference to all the concessions that the local fisheries sector benefits from.

### 5.1 FUEL CONCESSION

#### Present situation

The Fuel Incentive Scheme was initiated in 1991 by SFA in collaboration with the Ministry responsible for Finance with the aim of reducing the operating costs of boat owners hence improving the profitability of their fishing operations, and in return guarantee and maintain food security.

Currently, the fuel limits for the local fishing vessels are allocated as per the below table.

Table 8: Fuel limits for local fishing vessels

VESSEL TYPE	ENGINE SIZE	HP	AVERAGE NO. OF TRIPS	FUEL LIMIT PER LITRES PER MONTH			ALLOCATION
				HANDLINE	TRAPS	NETS	
LEKONOMI	1 cylinder	12	3				600
		13	3				650
LAVENIR	2 cylinders	15	3				600
		23	3				1000
		28	3				1150
		30	3				1200
		40	3				1600
WHALER	3 cylinders	34	3				1000
		42	3				1300
		50	3				1600
SCHOONER	4 cylinders	56	2				1800
		60	2				1800
		78	2				2300
		100	2				3000
	6 cylinders	115	2				3500
		145	1				3800
		190	1			4200	
OUTBOARD/ MINI MAHE		15	20	240	132	300	
		25	20	400	220	500	
		40	20	640	352	800	
		55	22	880	484	1100	
		85	22	1360	748	1700	
		115	22	1840	1012	2300	

Source: SFA

There are two systems in place for fuel concession. The first, for artisanal fishery, which involves the refund of the concessionary rate of SCR 8.00 per litre for purchasing fuel at private fuel stations. Whilst the second, is for the semi-industrial fishery and they directly purchase fuel at the reduced price, after deduction of the concession at SFA fuel station at Victoria or Providence artisanal fishing port.

### **Present procedure for artisanal and semi-industrial fishing**

In order for artisanal fishers to be eligible for fuel concession, they must adhere to the following processes:

- The vessel need to be licensed by SFA;
- The artisanal fishermen purchase fuel at private fuel stations at full price;
- The fishermen need to submit their claim forms, which comprise detailed information of their fishing activities and receipts of fuel purchased;
- SFA validates and confirms if the vessels have undertaken or initiated the fishing activities;
- Once SFA approves the request it is submitted to SRC to initiate the refund of SCR 8.00 per litre.

In 2017, a total of 454 vessels benefited from fuel concession whilst, in 2018 439 vessels benefited. The claim for fuel ranges from SCR 2,000 to SCR 22,000 per boat owners per month, and amounting to an average of SCR 24.95 million per year for the period of 2013 to 2018.

The system in place for fuel concession for the semi-industrial fishery is as follows:

- Before initiating each fishing trip the boat owner need to fill in a form to request the amount of fuel.
- The form is endorsed by Authorised SFA officers by checking if the vessels have undertaken the fishing activity (confirm by VMS) and checking content of the logbook and sale receipt;
- Once approved the form is submitted to the staff at the fuel station and the boat owner can then purchase the fuel.

In 2017, approximately 31 vessels benefited from fuel concession, whilst in 2018 a total of 29 longline vessels benefited from fuel concession. During that same year, the 25 boat owners involved in the sea cucumber fishery were granted fuel concession. The claim for fuel ranges between 2,000 litres (SCR 16,000) to 4,000 litres (SCR 32,000) for sea cucumber and semi-industrial longline per vessel per month, amounting to an average mean SCR 8.8 million per year for the period of 2013 to 2018.

On average SCR 33.3 Million per year were spent on fuel subsidies for the period of 2013 to 2018 for both the artisanal and semi-industrial longline fisheries.

In the artisanal fishery, the most common problem with the fuel scheme is establishing whether fishing trips have been undertaken on a regular basis in order for them to become entitled for the concessions.

As a result, this has inflated the cost of fuel subsidies and over the past six years has cost Government a total of SCR 202,372,030.88 that constitute of SCR 149,682,933.80 in the artisanal sector and SCR 52,689,097.08 in the Semi-Industrial sector, as illustrated in the below table:

Table 9: Cost of fuel concession borne by the Government

Year	Artisanal sector	Semi-industrial sector	Total
2013	22,142,060.991	7,129,056.68	<b>29,271,117.67</b>
2014	26,735,650.423	7,893,068.23	<b>34,628,718.65</b>
2015	23,708,371.32	7,106,808.82	<b>30,815,180.14</b>
2016	22,528,184.40	9,011,273.77	<b>31,539,458.17</b>
2017	28,552,658.53	13,003,396.30	<b>41,556,054.83</b>
2018	23,708,371.32	8,545,493.28	<b>32,253,864.60</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>149,682,933.8</b>	<b>52,689,097.08</b>	<b>202,372,030.88</b>

Source: SFA (2018)

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

To better manage the fuel concession, the procedure for allocating fuel subsidies will be reviewed by introducing measures to mitigate abuse in the system by first quarter of 2020 as per the following:

- There will be the introduction of a fuel card system;
- Fuel entitlement will be loaded on fuel card monthly;
- The cards can be used at any time subject to the allowable limit within the specific month;
- All fishing vessels with inboard engine's using diesel will obtain fuel from SFA pump regardless of the classification of fishery (once designated pumps are installed);
- The card will only be reloaded monthly after conditions are met which will include:
  - Vessel tracking systems verification to establish that the fisherman did go fishing and distance travelled;
  - Catch declaration certificate, distance travel and fuel consumption are to be provided by the licensee for each trip, and;
  - Verification of fishing activity by SFA will be done in collaboration with the fisherman's association.
  
- The fuel cards will be reloaded by SFA within an approved framework;
- SFA will make a monthly submission to the SRC for value of fuel issued at concessionary rate;
- SRC will pay SEYPEC directly according to the above submission;
- A network system will be introduced which will link the fuel stations and the SFA fuel pump stations with an SFA point of sale system (POS);
- A proper system with proper segregation of duties at the SFA with level of authorization will be established

In order to qualify for fuel concession the following conditions must be adhered to:

- Vessels must be registered as a commercial fishing vessel;
- New owners of fishing vessels will need to pass the three months probationary period in order to benefit under the scheme after obtaining a fishing vessel license. This will allow ample time to assess its fishing activity in relation to the set criteria for fuel claim eligibility;

- Vessels tracking device needs to be in operation at all times;
- Self-reporting of catch data (either manually or electronically) by all fishermen will be mandatory.

## 5.2 ICE PRODUCTION

### Present Situation

At present, there is a lack of ice capacity/ice making facilities, although SFA has invested in ten ice plants to assist the local fishing community to have access to ice. SFA also subsidises the operating costs of these ice plants, offering ice at a discounted rate to fishermen due to the high cost of electricity (Rassool, 2017).

Some private fish processors also operate ice plant to supply boat owners contracted with them for the supply of fresh fish on ice.

Table 10: Ice plant location and productivity

LOCATION	QTY	MAKE	DATE COMMISSIONED	PRODUCTION CAPACITY (TONS)	DEMAND PER YEAR	ACTUAL PRODUCTION (TONS)	% PRODUCTION	
Bel Ombre	2	Japanese Mycom NH3	2010	5 (2.5 × 2)	10,513	2	40	
		Zieggra Containerize R404	2016	10		9	90	
Victoria	1	Zieggra Containerize R404	2015	10		9	90	
Anse Royale	1	Japanese Mycom R22	2002	5		2	40	
Providence	2	Japanese Mycom NH3	2009	10 (5×2)		9	90	
		Japanese Mycom NH4	2018	10 (5×2)		10	100	
Anse la Mouche	1	Japanese Mycom R22	1995	2.5		1.4	56	
Praslin	1	Japanese Mycom R22	1992	5		3.8	76	
<b>TOTAL PRODUCTION</b>				<b>57.5</b>			<b>46.2</b>	<b>80.3</b>

The actual daily production capacity of ice is 46.2 tons. It is estimated by SFA that on average, ice is being produced at 4.5 days per week. At this rate, actual production of 10,811 tons per year is slightly above demand of 10,513 tons per year. However some areas such as Praslin, Victoria and Providence demand are higher than production due to the concentration of larger vessels and their timing of fishing trips coinciding.

With the continuing expansion of the semi-industrial sector demand for ice continues to grow. Government aims at promoting private sector investment under the right mix of incentives that would make ice affordable.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

- Replace old and inefficient ice plants to improve production efficiency, by first quarter of 2020;
- Purchase new ice plants to meet demand in certain areas on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue, by fourth quarter of 2019;
- Government will re-assess the management of SFA ice plants;
- Where applicable improve storage capacity of existing ice plants;
- Assess the possibility of using renewable energy to reduce the cost of ice production, by first quarter of 2020, and;
- To provide an incentive of 50% of the cost of ice machine (with a maximum amount to be determined) for boat owners who opt to invest in the purchase and installation of such autonomous ice producing machine on-board their vessels. This offer will be available for a period of one year effective first quarter of 2020.

## 6. MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE (MCS)

### Present Situation

The Seychelles Fishing Authority is responsible for MCS as per its legal mandate under the SFA Establishment Act 1984 and the Seychelles Fisheries Act 2014.

According to FAO, MCS means;

- i. **Monitoring** - the continuous requirement for the measurement of fishing effort characteristics and resource yields.
- ii. **Control** - the regulatory conditions under which the exploitation of the resource may be conducted.
- iii. **Surveillance** - the degree and types of observations required to maintain compliance with the regulatory controls imposed on fishing activities

To enforce the Fisheries Act and Regulations in the context of MCS, to combat Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, SFA works closely with several other organisations such as the Defence Forces (Coast Guard), Seychelles Airwings, Seychelles Police, Port Authority, Department of Environment, Seychelles Maritime Safety Administration and the Attorney General's Office. Despite the close working relationship with the mentioned organisations there were no formal agreements or standard operating procedures (SOPs) in place to enhance these working relationships defining the roles and responsibilities of each organisation and procedures to be followed.

SFA has no offshore surveillance assets and relies on the Seychelles Coastguard and Seychelles Airwings to conduct surveillance missions. There are no surveillance plan based on risk assessment and SFA relies heavily on information from fishermen on possible illegal fishing activities for interception.

In recent years there has been an increase of illegal fishing activities in the Seychelles waters, mainly from Sri Lanka followed by illegal sea cucumber fishing from Madagascar fishermen. The table below shows that Sri Lankan vessels account for 50% of IUU fishing:

Table 11: IUU fishing

NO. OF IUU FISHING CASES	YEAR	VESSEL NAME	NATIONALITY
1	2012	Lucky too	Sri-Lankan
2	2014	Maliki	Iranian
3	2014	Maoullai	Iranian
4	2015	Mushukumari	Sri Lankan
5	2015	Soa- Vahiny	Malagasy
6	2015	Bordeur	Malagasy
7	2015	Rehoboth	Indian
8	2015	Jesh Max	Indian
9	2017	Mutukumari 1	Sri Lankan
10	2017	Subapathum 6	Sri Lankan
11	2018	Muthukumari 3	Sri Lankan
12	2018	Subaphatum 1	Sri Lankan
13	2018	Nuwanputha II	Sri Lankan
14	As at June 2019	No Name	Comoros
15	As at June 2019	Nuwan Putha II	Sri Lankan
16	As at June 2019	Shane Grila	Madagascar

Source: SFA

The National Information Sharing and Coordination Centre (NISCC) was officially opened in July 2017 to provide maritime security necessary for sustainable development of the Blue Economy sector. One of the function of the NISCC is to act as a first point of contact when responding to maritime crime related activities, and serve as the centre of maritime security operations for key national stakeholders. (Seychelles Nation, 2017)

It is also to serve and coordinate with all key national stakeholders, to be represented at the centre, in order to enhance the coordination and improve response time (Seychelles Nation, 2017).

To date MOUs have been signed with all of the above stakeholders, however, only the SPDF and the SMSA have deployed personnel to the centre.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

- SFA will post its representative at the NISCC by first quarter of 2020;

- SFA will develop and implement a National Plan of Action against IUU fishing by first quarter of 2020;
- The Ministry in collaboration with SFA will set up a compensation mechanism to compensate fishermen who provide information on illegal fishing after successful prosecution by first quarter of 2020;
- Government will develop a mechanism for the handling of vessels apprehended on the presumption of IUU fishing until prosecution by first quarter of 2020;
- Government will immediately engage with the respective foreign authorities of nationals engaged in IUU fishing activities;
- Government will assess the possibility of introducing new technology such as drone to combat IUU fishing;
- Owners or operators of Seychelles fishing vessels engaged in IUU fishing and other fisheries crime may not benefit from Government subsidies or concessions, and;
- The Government will take drastic measures, including the sinking of foreign fishing vessels convicted of IUU fishing in Seychelles waters.

## 6.1 VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM (VMS)

### **Present Situation**

Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) was introduced in 2002. Despite the observed benefit of VMS within the artisanal fishery, a framework is yet to be developed and implemented for the entire fleet in this sector. This includes a sound legislative framework that sets out the requirements for the operation of a VMS system while at sea.

The installation of transceiver terminal on board artisanal vessel is managed under an *Acceptance Agreement* between the vessel owner and the SFA. At present, VMS are installed only on vessels with autonomous power supply and are not installed on vessels without power supply such as mini mahé.

SFA is currently responsible to install, maintain and repair and/or replace damaged transceiver terminals including communication costs related to the terminals. In other words, fishermen have no financial burden related to transceiver terminal installed on their vessels. This has resulted in lack of care and negligence towards the transceiver terminals, and skippers refusing to operate the terminals.

This, coupled with a low interest in the fishery to participate in the VMS programme has made the implementation of the VMS programme challenging to the SFA. At present installation of transceiver terminal is done on a voluntary basis.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

The Ministry together with SFA will put in place a VMS management plan for both fisheries management, and safety consideration for its effective implementation by third quarter 2019.

In view of the issues highlighted above, the management plan will address the following:

- i. Institute a legal framework to improve governance of the VMS programme within the small-scale fishery;
  - Mandatory use of transceiver terminals on-board domestic vessels involved in commercial fishing and related activities, including sports fishing vessel;
  - Prohibit the tampering and deliberate vandalism of transceiver terminal;
  - Establish minimum standards for installing transceiver terminal on board domestic fishing vessels;
  - Establishing minimum reporting requirements from the transceiver terminals deployed on domestic vessels, including reporting frequencies to the SFA;
  - Establish a minimum time period whereby a vessel may continue fishing operation in the event that a transceiver terminal ceases to operate while undertaking a trip;
  - Establish alternative reporting mechanism in the event that a transceiver terminal ceases to report while undertaking a fishing trip;
  - That the owner duly informs the SFA in the event of malfunctioning, or breakdown of the transceiver terminal within a defined timeline.
  
- ii. Ownership of the transceiver terminal:
  - Transceiver terminals will be the property of the vessel owners, once allocated and installed on their vessel;
  - Operational, maintenance, repair and any subsequent replacements if necessary will be the sole responsibility of the vessels owner. This includes any costs attributed to the aforementioned.

- iii. Financial sustainability of the VMS Programme, including alternate means to source, purchase and install and repair transceiver terminals:
- SFA will continue to provide new transceiver terminals for new applicants. However, all subsequent replacement of transceiver terminals will be at the expense of the owners. This includes costs related to the purchase and installation of transceiver terminals;
  - To support this, the Government will establish mechanism to make the purchase of transceiver terminals tax free;
  - Government will work with suppliers operating in Seychelles to ensure that they provide the necessary services to local boat owners.
  - In the long run, the SFA will be responsible to only inspect, and ensure that the terminals report to the SFA as necessary, including the necessary programming of the terminals on the vessels.
  - SFA will be responsible for the communication fees relating to the reporting of vessels' position from the transceiver terminals to the Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC);
  - A VMS management fee will be applicable upon application of a fishing vessel license to support costs relating to the commissioning and reporting of transceiver terminal to the FMC.
- iv. Vessels without autonomous power supply will be equipped with battery-operated hand-held or solar-powered transceiver terminals, and;
- v. Improve institutional capacity of the SFA to implement the programme.

## 7. INDUSTRIAL FISHING

### 7.1 PURSE SEINE FISHERY

#### Present Situation

In 2018 SFA issued license to 44 purse seiners (PS) and 16 supply vessels (SV) all of them operating from Port Victoria. The table below indicates the flag of the vessels and the number of PS and SV.

Table 12: Purse seiners and Supply vessels license by SFA in 2018

PS & SV LICENSED IN 2018		
FLAG	NUMBER	SUPPLY VESSEL
KOREA	2	1
FRANCE	12	2
ITALY	1	1
MAURITIUS	2	1
SEYCHELLES	13	5
SPAIN	14	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>16</b>

There are no local investors participating in this fishery, but there are interest, including joint venture possibilities.

A total of 80% of total catch (341,870MT - 2017) in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) is transacted through Port Victoria for transshipment and landing (20%) at Indian Ocean Tuna Limited (IOT). However, monitoring of transshipment and landings in Port Victoria remain a major challenge.

Transshipment and landing fees are collected at a rate of US\$ 4 per tons by the Seychelles Port Authority, however it is the SFA which perform the necessary verification, validation, prior to authorizing all transshipment and landings, record keeping and notification to the IOTC as a flag and Port State requirement. These tasks are as a result of Seychelles' obligation under IOTC resolution 16/11 'on Port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing', where SFA is required to monitor transshipment and landings in port.

The extensive use of supply vessel (SV) is directly related to the expansion of fish aggregating device (FAD) over the years, and is commonly constructed with local bamboo and metallic structure. Local bamboo is getting rare and artisanal trap (kazye) fishermen complain that it is becoming difficult to obtain bamboo for traps.

FADs in the purse seine fishery are free floating (drifting), attracting fish such as tuna and marlin. It also attracts other marine species such as, sharks, turtles, rays, and even dolphins, in addition to the unintentional capture of juvenile tuna. It is well known that a lot of lost FADs end up on shores or get stuck in coral reefs of outer islands causing environmental damages.

Yellowfin tuna was considered to be overexploited in the Indian Ocean in 2016 by IOTC. Consequently, in 2017 a management measure was introduced through Resolution 16/01 now 19/01 on an interim plan for rebuilding the Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna stock in the IOTC area of competence. This resulted in Seychelles having a limit of 33,211 metric tons per year.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

- Seychelles will assess the maximum size and number of purse seiners which will be licensed and/or flagged by first quarter of 2020;
- Seychelles will relook at the conditions for flagging of foreign-owned vessels immediately by first quarter of 2020;
- Seychelles will request the IOTC Scientific Committee to consider establishing a minimum mesh size for purse seine nets by first quarter of 2020;
- Seychelles will relook at all conditions of access for fishing opportunities in Seychelles waters by first quarter of 2020;
- SFA will enter into negotiation with the Seychelles Port Authority regarding the transshipment and landing fees by first quarter of 2020.
- A FAD management plan will be developed and consideration to be given to the following:
  - Government will assess the situation of bamboo and look for alternative materials for FAD construction, for instance the use of albizia;
  - There shall be a complete ban on deployment and use of non-biodegradable FADs;
  - All FADs to be deployed in Seychelles waters shall be assemble on land;

- All materials used to assemble the FAD shall be individually marked with the IOTC vessel identification number;
- It shall be the responsibility of the owner of the fishing vessel to track and retrieve all its deployed FADs and associated materials;
- Heavy fines will be imposed on owner and/or master of fishing vessel whose FADs are left abandon and land on any reef or beach in the Seychelles.

## 7.2 LONGLINE FISHERY

### **Present Situation**

The industrial longline fishery is dominated by the South East Asian fleets which are focused mainly on the high value frozen tuna for sashimi markets. There are 61 industrial longliners registered in Seychelles which operates within and outside our EEZ, they are mostly foreign-owned or in partnership with Seychellois investors. In 2018, SFA issued 147 licenses to longliners at a value of USD 24,000.00 per vessel per year.

Catch from this fishery are not transacted in Port Victoria and longliners rarely call to Port Victoria, including that of our own flagged vessels. Transshipments are done at sea outside of Seychelles EEZ or in other ports in the region, mostly in Port Louis, Mauritius.

Apart from registration, license, autorisation, VMS and agent fees there are no significant contribution to the Seychelles economy, except for possible future catch allocation under an IOTC framework.

### **The following actions will be undertaken:**

- Explore the possibility of constructing an industrial longline quay and facilitate investment in land base facilities and eventually push towards a banning of transshipment at sea, and;
- Seychelles will assess all conditions of access for fishing opportunities in Seychelles waters immediately.

## 7.3 SEYCHELLES FLAGGED VESSELS

### **Present Situation**

There is a total of 13 purse seiners and industrial longline fishing vessels registered or flagged in Seychelles. When a vessel is recommended to be flagged in Seychelles, the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) section of SFA performs verification on the vessels history and search on the IUU lists of all Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) to ensure that the vessel is not listed as an IUU vessel.

A physical compliance inspection on the vessel is conducted. This inspection is carried out by an SFA authorised fishery officer but in the majority of cases, such is done in a foreign port at the cost of the operator. SFA does not request information on the owner and or operator of the vessels under the current flag and of those who will own or operate the vessel under Seychelles flag. Once all SFA formalities are completed approval is given to SMSA for registration.

Industrial long line fishing vessels, both foreign and local are allowed to take a six months license at a cost of USD 17,500.00 or a 1 year license from USD 20,125.00 to USD 24,000.00.

For Seychelles flagged purse seine fishing vessel, a 1 year license is USD 90,000.00 payable in two equal installments compared to foreign purse seiners under foreign agreement which varies from USD 110,000.00 to USD 120,000.00.

Similar to foreign supply vessels, Seychelles flagged supply vessels pay a yearly license fee of USD 5,000.00.

Seychelles contribution toward IOTC has continued to increase over the years due to the increase in the average catch of our fleet. In addition, Seychelles incur other staff and administrative costs on IOTC related works.

The Seychelles flagged longline fishing vessels employ crew of different nationalities coming different parts of the world, such as Philippines, Indonesia, China etc. As these vessels do not frequent Port Victoria, the respective authorities are unable to ensure that the working conditions of the crew on board these vessels or their contract of employment are in order.

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

i. Industrial fishing vessel registration terms and conditions:

- Government will establish agreements with owners of all industrial Seychelles flagged fishing vessels detailing terms and conditions for their registration;
- As of first quarter of 2020, all Seychelles flagged fishing permitted to fish outside Seychelles waters, must have a valid Seychelles fishing license at all times;
- As of first quarter of 2020, all compliance inspections shall be conducted in Port Victoria;
- Establish national framework to manage capacity and fishing efforts, and work towards regulating transshipment at sea;
- Establish a framework to facilitate Seychellois ownership of industrial fishing vessels, and;
- Government will recover IOTC related costs in relation to Seychelles flagged fishing vessels.

ii. Industrial fishing vessel registration procedure:

- Government will adopt registration procedures in line with the paragraph 16 of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance;
- Approval for industrial fishing vessel to be flagged in Seychelles will only be done by the Minister responsible for fisheries in consultation with SFA, and;
- In the event of IUU fishing or noncompliance to the terms and conditions of registration of license, deregistration may be done by the Minister responsible for fisheries without the consent of the owner.

iii. License Revision:

License fee will be revised and the operators be given advance notification of the revision.

iv. Employment on board industrial fishing vessels:

As part of its flag State responsibility, employment and labour conditions on board Seychelles industrial fishing vessels must meet the minimum international recognised standards. The respective Government agencies, SFA, SMSA and the Department of Employment will collaborate to subject Seychelles flagged fishing vessels to comply with these standards, and

also to the basic wage conditions either provided by Seychelles legislation or minimum standard set by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), whichever is highest and under no circumstance be below ILO standard.

- v. Ratify the ILO work in fishing convention no.188 adopted in 2007.

## 7.4 BYCATCH

### Present situation

Historically there has been no systematic collection of data specific for bycatch when it comes to landing, transshipping, re-export and processing of bycatch. Processed bycatch were classified as either fish or tuna under the HS Code. Several studies have estimated that between 14,000 MT to 15,000 MT of bycatch are caught from the purse seine fishery in the IOTC area of competence. From this estimation, bycatch from industrial purse seine fishing vessels represent about 4 % of total catch in the South Western Indian Ocean (SWIO). In order to verify these figures, the Ministry together with the SFA began the collection of data on bycatch.

Based on an exercise carried out by SFA and MFAg in 2018, a figure of 14,511 metric tons were landed for value addition and export as illustrated in the table below

Table 14: Bycatch landed in Port Victoria and its use

USE	MT per year	%
Export	5677	39
Fish meal	2,220	15.3
Fish oil	2,000	13.7
Dog food & Baits	3,960	27.3
Value addition	654	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,511</b>	<b>100</b>

In 2018 the Cabinet of Ministers approved the policy on the Management of Bycatch from the industrial fishery.

However, as some deficiencies have been identified with its implementation, a revision will be undertaken.

### The following actions will be undertaken:

- Review the bycatch policy by first quarter of 2020.

## **8. FISHERIES ASSOCIATION**

### **Present Situation**

There are currently eleven fishermen and/or boat owners associations. The associations are fragmented and there is no central organisation to legally represent the association at national level. As result, this makes it difficult for Government to effectively work with the associations. Therefore, there is a need to establish a national organisation that will represent all associations.

### **The following action will be undertaken:**

- Encourage the establishment a national structure to increase unity and cooperation in the fisheries sector among the associations that will play an active role in advancing the interests of the industry at national and international level. The structure should also aim to preserve and promote the collective interests of the different associations in Seychelles;
- Empower associations to administer public fisheries infrastructures in their respective districts through an approved mechanism; and
- Empower associations to be able to work more collaboratively with SFA.

## **9. FISHERY SATELLITE ACCOUNT**

It is a fact that presently the true contribution of fisheries to the economy of our country is not being captured in its entirety, thus, the need to assess and evaluate its real contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) through the Fishery Satellite Account, spearheaded by the Ministry.

## **10. INSURANCE**

### **Present Situation**

In 2013, the Government launched the Agricultural Disaster and Fisheries Insurance Scheme (ADFIS) with aim of:

- Covering all losses due to all types of natural perils;
- To operate the scheme on market principles, and;
- To have a cost effective and voluntary scheme for all registered fishers and farmers, which is easy to handle.

The current scheme is being administered by SACOS with the involvement of H. Savy Insurance (HSI). The SFA acts only as a referral agent which assist in the transaction between the insurer and the insured.

The scheme is voluntary and designed to provide the necessary insurance protection to boat owners on SFA records. However boat owners who do not participate in the scheme do not have a recourse or expect any support from Government and/or the scheme following any loss. The maximum value sum insured of the scheme is available up to SCR 2 million per vessel. Presently only 53 vessels are insured and the total premium being paid by SFA is SCR 691,192.

### **The following action will be undertaken:**

- SFA will establish a registry of all licensed fishing vessels by first quarter of 2020, in order to know the exact number of vessels and their insurance implications.

## 11. ACCESS TO FINANCE

### Present Situation

Investment is not viable without adequate finance, thus access to finance is crucial for business development and ultimately the development of the economy. In Seychelles, getting access to credit is one of the main impediments to the growth of many businesses, particularly for the fisheries-related businesses.

The Government and other key stakeholders recognized that provision of credit to either start a business or expand, was and still is a fundamental problem and has therefore endeavoured to put in place several schemes to assist.

Current schemes include:

#### 11.1 SME SCHEME

The SME Scheme was set up by the Government and geared towards boosting access to finance for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) so as to encourage the development of businesses and entrepreneurship, excluding retail and wholesale businesses.

In 2013, the Government through the Ministry responsible for Finance signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with some commercial banks for the implementation and financing of the incentive scheme. They were later joined by a few commercial banks and the Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS) in 2014.

The participating banks and the year they joined the Scheme are listed in the table below:

Table 16: Banks participating in the SME scheme

<b>PARTICIPATING BANKS</b>	<b>YEAR</b>
Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB)	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2013
Nouvobanq	
Seychelles Commercial Bank (SCB)	
Habib Bank <sup>14</sup>	
Bank of Baroda	
Barclays Bank	
BMI	
Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS)	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Credit Union	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Bank of Ceylon	

<sup>14</sup> Bank no longer operational

To be eligible to apply, the business needs to be new and has an annual group turnover below SCR 5 million.

The table below summarises all the details pertaining to the SME Scheme:

Table 17: SME loan requirements

<b>Max loan amount<sup>15</sup></b>	SCR 3,000,000									
<b>Min personal contribution</b>	Not exceeding 2.5% of loan amount									
<b>Interest rate<sup>16</sup></b>	5% on the first SCR1m; 7% on the next SCR2m									
<b>Repayment terms</b>	5 to 7 years									
<b>Grace period<sup>17</sup></b>	Up to 6 months									
<b>Guarantee/Security</b>	<p><b>Govt.</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Years</th> <th>Guarantee</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-5</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>60%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 and above</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Client</b> Not more than 100% of the loan value</p>		Years	Guarantee	0-5	50%	6	60%	7 and above	70%
Years	Guarantee									
0-5	50%									
6	60%									
7 and above	70%									
<b>Application fee</b>	Not applicable									
<b>Bank Charges</b>	Not more than 0.25% of the value of the loan for the first SCR3m									
<b>Penalty</b>	In accordance to the Bank Policy									

The quantity and amount disbursed to the Fisheries sector is as follows:

<sup>15</sup> Not applicable for refinancing of existing loans

<sup>16</sup> If the Bank Prime Lending Rate is lower than the interest rate stipulated, the Bank Prime Lending Rate shall apply

<sup>17</sup> During the grace period, the client and the Bank can negotiate to pay either interest only or capitalize the interest

Table 18: Number and value of SME fisheries loans disbursed

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	No of Loans	Value	No of Loans	Value	No of loans	Value	No of Loans	Value	No of Loans	Value
<b>DBS</b>	22	8,369,900	19	13,995,220	30	21,697,000	9	2,808,000	10	3,909,700
<b>MCB</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1,747,939	4	1,390,500
<b>NOUVOBANQ</b>	1	2,925,000	-	-	1	250,000	-	-	1	320,000
<b>SCB</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1,832,806
<b>SCU</b>	-	-	1	405,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>BARCLAYS</b>	1	1,358,400	1	3,000,000	-	-	1	149,000	-	-
<b>BARODA</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>BANK OF CEYLON</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12,653,300</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17,400,220</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21,947,000</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4,704,939</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7,453,006</b>

## 11.2 FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT FUND (FDF)

The Fisheries Development Fund (FDF) is derived from the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Seychelles.

The purpose of the FDF is primarily aimed at furthering economic development of the fisheries sector by improving the financing opportunities for local investors.

The table below indicates the amount that was initially allocated for each category of the productive sectors in the industry.

Table 19: FDF allocation

<b>PRODUCTIVE SECTOR</b>	<b>AMOUNT ALLOCATED</b>
Purchase of long line fishing vessels	€2.2m
Value addition and export promotion	€0.3m
Vessels upgrading	€0.2m

In view of the administrative burden attached to the FDF, an agreement between the SFA and DBS was signed on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2009 and amended on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011, whereby DBS administers the FDF on behalf of SFA, who provides the funds (€2,700,000).

The table below depicts the main loan conditions and requirements:

Table 20: FDF loan conditions and requirements

<b>Max loan amount</b>	€ 500,000 <sup>18</sup>
<b>Min personal contribution</b>	5% of total project cost
<b>Interest rate</b>	3%
<b>Repayment terms</b>	10 years (12 years in exceptional cases)
<b>Grace period (with capitalized interest)</b>	Not exceeded 9 months from the date of the first disbursement
<b>Guarantee/Security</b>	As per normal DBS requirements or shall not be less than 1.0 times the loan amount
<b>Application fee</b>	1% of the loan amount not exceeding SR 5,000
<b>Bank Charges</b>	
<b>Penalty</b>	Equivalent to Commercial Bank's prevailing saving's rate + 1%

Joint venture investment projects can also benefit from the FDF; however, it should be based on technological transfer and foreign direct investment and must have 51% Seychellois beneficiary ownership.

Note that only one loan per fishing vessel is permissible.

The table below indicates the amount of funds disbursed under the FDF and the balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

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<sup>18</sup> This amount may be exceeded in special circumstances whereby the promoter wants to invest in a fishing fleet of more than two vessels

Table 21: FDF loan disbursement, loan payment and outstanding loan amount

<b>LOAN PURPOSE</b>	<b>AMOUNT DISBURSED</b>	<b>TOTAL REPAID</b>	<b>TOTAL OUTSTANDING</b>
Purchase of long line fishing vessels	43,812,943.20	10,145,783.00	33,667,160.20
Value addition and export promotion	12,214,000.00	4,373,970.00	7,840,030.00
Vessels upgrading	780,000.00	733,000.00	47,000.00
	<b>SCR 56,806,943.20</b>	<b>SCR 15,252,753.00</b>	<b>SCR 41,554,190.20</b>

The first loan from the FDF was disbursed in 2010 and the last time it was paid out was in 2015. So far, SCR 56,806,943.20 has been disbursed out of which SCR 15,252,753.00 has been repaid, meaning that a total of SCR 41,554,190.20 remains outstanding. Due to non-performing of the loans, in 2015, the SFA guided by the decision of the EU-Seychelles Joint Committee, suspended the offering of loans for the purchase of long line fishing vessels.

### 11.3 DBS

Loans offered by the DBS under its portfolio are geared mainly towards the financing of artisanal and semi-industrial fishing subsector, for the purchase or construction of boats, purchase of navigational equipment and reparation of fishing boats.

The table below shows the quantity and total value of loans disbursed by the DBS in total for the fisheries sector.

Table 22: Number and value of DBS loans disbursed

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NO. OF LOANS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
2014	27	10,086,200.00
2015	20	14,045,220.00
2016	31	24,473,004.00
2017	12	5,299,257.00
2018	14	5,273,589.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>59,177,270.00</b>

The breakdown of the total loans are as follows:

Table 23: Breakdown of fisheries loans disbursed by DBS

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	No. of loans	Value	No. of loans	Value	No. of loans	Value	No. of loans	Value	No. of loans	Value
<b>DBS Scheme</b>	5	1,716,300	1	50,000	1	2,776,004	3	2,491,257	2	1,363,889
<b>SME Scheme</b>	22	8,369,900	19	13,995,220	30	21,697,000	9	2,808,000	12	3,909,700
<b>Total</b>	27	10,086,200	20	14,045,220	31	24,473,004	12	5,299,257	14	5,273,589

**The following actions will be undertaken:**

- Government will implement a moratorium on the importation of second-hand fishing vessels with immediate effect and this will be regulated through the first schedule of the Customs Management (Prohibited and Restricted Goods) Regulation;
- Government will carry out a capacity assessment of both fishing vessels and processing facilities before approving new loans under FDF and DBS portfolio;
- Government will review the Agreement with DBS especially with regards to loan recovery;
- Create a fund under FDF to assist boat owners involve in small-scale pelagic fishery with small gears, engine maintenance and a one off working capital of SCR 150,000 for vessels;
- Create a scheme for financing of semi-industrial boat owners who opt to install autonomous ice machine on their boat; and
- Prohibit the importation of new semi-industrial fishing vessels not equipped with autonomous ice machine on-board.

## 12. FISHERIES LEGISLATION

### **Present Situation**

The Fisheries Act of 2014 is the primary legislation governing the fisheries sector of the Seychelles. The Act provides for the management and sustainable development of fisheries sector, including aquaculture, and makes provision for the licensing of fishing vessels, the regulation and enforcement of fishing and fishing related activities and caters for offences with regards to the breach of its provisions. The Fisheries Regulations of 1987 is the main piece of secondary legislation, a product of the Fisheries Act 1987. Amongst other things, it covers the conditions for a local fishing license, establishes management measures for certain fisheries and covers marking of vessels and gears. The Fisheries Regulations 1987 was recently supplemented by the Fisheries (Shark Finning) Regulations 2006 which addresses shark finning on board fishing vessels measuring 24 metres or more in length. The Fisheries Regulations 1987 is outdated and is in urgent need of revision and modernization.

Although the 2014 Act took into account to a certain extent internationally recognized fisheries norms, standards and best practices, notably those stemming from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), it failed to adequately transpose the provisions of those international instruments. Furthermore, the Fisheries Act 2014 failed to make adequate provisions for the domestication of binding conservation and management measures adopted by regional fisheries management organizations to which Seychelles is party to, particularly the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).

### **The following actions will be undertaken:**

A comprehensive revision and gap analysis of the current fisheries legislations is to be undertaken in two phases:

- Phase 1: Transposition of Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) resolutions and other international fisheries instruments into the Fisheries Act and Regulations focusing on industrial fishing and to a certain extent semi-industrial fishing is ongoing.

- Phase 2: Revision of Fisheries Act and Regulations and the introduction of new regulations focusing on artisanal, semi-industrial, sports and sports competition fishing and recreational fishing by fourth quarter of 2020.

Both phases will be developed through stakeholders consultations.

## 13. EMPLOYMENT

### Present Situation

There are on average 1,300 Seychellois employed in the artisanal fishing sector which is reserved for Seychellois only.

Further to the Ministry's consultative meeting held during the month of May 2019 (Annex 4), there were requests to employ foreigners in artisanal fishing. It is being claimed that there are not enough interested Seychellois available as most of them are on substance abuse. It is also claimed that when they go out at sea, they have to return prematurely, due to withdrawals sickness.

It is a fact that there is lack of youth and women engaging as fishers. Several reasons have been given for such situation which includes lack of incentive especially at the start of their career.

### The following actions will be undertaken:

- Commercial fisherman will now be defined in the Fisheries Act, as reproduced below;  
*“A commercial fisherman means a person of the age of 15 years and above who is commercially engaged in fishing for a minimum of 16 days per month”*
- Note that in the event that a fishermen cease to meet the above definition, without valid reason, that person will be declassified as a commercial fisherman. This will imply a revocation of this status;
- Commercial fishermen will be compensated with regards to social benefits in the same way as all workers;
- Government will work with associations to devise a pension scheme for fishers;
- Government will not relax the policy on foreigners in small-scale demersal fishing as it will contradict the effort being made in sustainable fishing;
- Government will extend the “My First Job” scheme to include the youths and women who want to become fishers within an approve framework, including incentives which is to be agreed upon with the Ministry responsible for Employment;
- APDAR and the Ministry of Family Affairs will work with the Ministry responsible for Fisheries to adopt innovative strategies to assist those fishers in need of treatment, and;

- SFA in collaboration with Seychelles Maritime Academy will develop a mechanism for formation of fishermen, skippers and seamen, similar to the framework that exists with SEYPEC, including the certification (Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers - STCW) of Seychellois seamen for embarkation on purse seine fishing vessels;

#### **14. PROCESSING**

The Government has allocated several plots of land for fish processing and associated facilities to local entrepreneurs as annexed for the full list (Annex 3).

In most of these cases, the land have not even been developed or the project started.

The Ministry responsible for fisheries and the Department of Blue Economy will formulate a strategy which will be in line with the existing situation vis-à-vis the availability of raw materials, processing capacity and marketing of domestic fish and fish products, in line with Government's vision for the post-harvest sub-sector.

## **B. AQUACULTURE**

The Aquaculture Sector has undergone several phases of sector planning and development from 2011 up to date. Through the Seychelles National Aquaculture Policy its main goal is “To guide an effectively managed and environmentally responsible aquaculture industry that contributes towards food security and the creation of wealth in the Seychelles.” Aquaculture has the potential to achieve a similar importance to the Blue Economy of Seychelles as its industrial fisheries sector has accomplished so far. Investment in aquaculture has been with the principles of the FAO EAA and the Fisheries Act 2014. It is anticipated that investment in the sector will commence in the second half of 2020.

The key deliverables for 2019-2020 are:

- Physical support infrastructure that is under development in the form of the Broodstock Acclimation and Quarantine Facility including a phase 2 expansion into an attached hatchery;
- Regulatory capacity is being created in the SFA;
- Land parcels have been identified and set aside for aquaculture;
- Market development initiatives have been progressed in the target markets;
- Investment incentives have been finalised;
- Preferential import and export tariffs have been finalised;
- Levies and license fees have been finalised;
- Pilot projects have commenced, and;
- The design and location of an R&D facility has commenced.

More details of the Aquaculture Sector Development Plan will be provided at the right time of the launch of the sector.

## C. PROJECTS

The aim of the projects listed below is to:

- Relieve fishermen from the hassle of carrying their equipment;
- Safe and secure mooring facilities for boats;
- Improve navigational safety through better access channels;
- Increase ice production capacity;
- Fish market and fish outlets to improve hygiene in the sale of fish;
- Increase value addition;
- Improve accessibility of fish for consumers;
- Reduce operating cost of fishermen;

Table 24: Projects to be undertaken

DISTRICT	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	COMPLETION DATE	ESTIMATED COST (SCR)
ANSE AUX PINS <sup>19</sup>	Market	December 2020	10,000,000
	Pontoon		
	Ice Plant		
	Fish outlet		
	Dredging of access channel		
	Toilet facilities		
	Gear shop		
	Office		
	Security post		
	Slipway		
ANSE BOILEAU	Market	December 2020	2,500,000
	Fish outlet		
ANSE ETOILE	Pontoon	June 2020	1,500,000
ANSE ETOILE (LA RETRAIT)	Pontoon	June 2020	2,500,000
	Market		
	Ice plant		
ANSE ROYALE	Jetty	June 2022	8,000,000
	Ice plant replacement	December 2019	800,000
BEAU VALLON <sup>20</sup>	Slipway		2,500,000
	Market		
	Fish outlet		

<sup>19</sup> Prototype for regional market and associated facilities (Annex 2)

<sup>20</sup> Subject to availability of land

<b>CASCADE</b>	Market	December 2020	8,000,000
	Gearstore		
	Slipway		
	Workshop		
	Fish outlet		
<b>ENGLISH RIVER</b>	Pontoon	June 2020	2,000,000
	Small fish market		
<b>GLACIS</b>	Breakwater	December 2020	10,000,000
	Ice Plant		
	Gearstore		
	Fence		
<b>PORT GLAUD</b>	Pontoon	June 2020	500,000
<b>BELOMBRE</b>	Processing plant		1,000,000
<b>BAIE ST. ANNE PRASLIN</b>	EIA	December 2020	10,000,000
	Access channel + basin		
	Pontoon		
	Market		
	Fish outlet		
	Ice plant replacement		
<b>GRAND ANSE PRASLIN</b>	EIA	December 2020	10,000,000
	Access channel + basin		
	Pontoon		
	Ice plant		
	New market		
<b>LA DIGUE</b>	Ice plant	September 2019	4,000,000
	Slipway	December 2019	
	Access channel (Choppy, L'Union, La Passe, dan Goulo)	March 2020	
<b>INDUSTRIAL ESTATE PROVIDENCE</b>	Boat repair	December 2020	5,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>78,300,000</b>

These projects will transform the way fishermen operate and carry out their activities. It will improve the operation, hygiene, security, and marketing and hopefully give their products greater value and economic returns.

## **D. SETTING UP OF A NEW COMPANY**

The fishing sector is presently experiencing serious difficulties and if nothing is done, it may collapse especially the small-scale pelagic fishery.

The following are the current difficulties:

- Shortages of ice;
- Cost of bait and lack of it;
- Inadequate fish processing facilities;
- Uncoordinated export of fish;
- Lack of other inputs such as fishing gears, engine parts, etc.;
- Lack of vision for the Seychelles label, and;
- Lack of sales outlet

The new structure will be as follows:

There will be a 100 percent Seychellois-owned Company. There will be participation of registered fishing associations in the said company.

The company will:

1. Take over all commercial assets of SFA which includes ice plants, processing facilities and others.
2. Ensure food security by stocking sufficient fish;
3. Enter into contract with fishermen for the sale of their catch;
4. Ensure the availability of fisheries inputs such as baits, hooks, lines, nets, engines, etc.;
5. Be responsible for the marketing of all fish and fish related products from Seychelles and represent the industry at international fairs to further promote local products;
6. Process fish and fish-related products for local and international markets;
7. Invest in modern vessels and equipment as when necessary;
8. Invest in any associated infrastructure as deemed necessary, and;
9. Invest any surplus/profits back into the fisheries community as and when needed.

The Company will be set up before the end of this year.

Any land which has not yet been leased will be put on hold so as to meet the requirements of the new company. This includes the quay front plots at Providence and Ile du Port. All the facilities which were constructed for fish processing at Providence which have not been leased will be taken back and allocated to the new company, based on its needs.

The six plots earmarked for marine-related activities at the Providence Industrial Estate will be reserved for allocation to the new company for providing much needed services for slipway and boat repair facilities for the small-scale fishing sector.

## **CONCLUSION**

The execution of this plan will address all aspects of the fishing sector from safety, registration, licensing, and management of the fisheries resources, infrastructural development, and administration of concessions, local entrepreneurial development, human capacity building and marketing. As a result, this will re-energise the fisheries sector and create an enabling dynamic platform for future economic development which will further support and boost the growth of the Blue Economy over the next three years.