

Meeting between WWF-SA and DFFE: Fisheries Management (6 September 2021)

Meeting Minutes

Zoom

11:30-14:00

1. Welcome

Meeting called by WWF-SA to update DFFE on current fisheries work/projects underway, which has direct relevance to FRD, MRM (including small-scale fisheries), AED and MCS and to identify areas for further collaboration with the Department.

Sue Middleton welcomed the meeting with WWF-SA and encouraged more frequent meetings of the two organisations to rebuild the relationship.

Attendees

Craig Smith	Marine Senior Manager (WWF-SA)
Monica Stassen	Marine Scientist (WWF-SA)
Bokamoso Lebepe	Project Coordinator (Fisheries Improvement Projects) (WWF-SA)
Delsy Sifundza	Project Coordinator (SAMPAN & Responsible Fisheries Alliance) (WWF-SA)
Sue Middleton	DDG Fisheries Management (DFFE)
Andrea Bernatzeder	Directorate: Aquaculture Research (DFFE)
Beleman Semoli	Chief Director: Aquaculture and Economic Development (DFFE)
Fatima Savel	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (DFFE)
Nkosinathi Dana	Chief Director: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (DFFE)
Keagan Desmond Halley	Operation Phakisa: Aquaculture Economic Development (DFFE)
Kim Prochazka	Director for Resource Research (Acting Chief Director for fisheries research and development) (DFFE)
Mandisile Mqoqi	Directorate: Offshore and HighSeas (DFFE)
William Selapa	Directorate: Aquaculture Research (DFFE)
Nhlanhla Nkosi	Deputy Director: Small Scale Fisheries (DFFE)
Sindisa Sigam	Deputy Director: Small Scale Fisheries (Assisting in line and Nett fisheries) (DFFE)
Vuyisani Jozana	Assistant Director: Small-scale fisheries (DFFE)
Wendy West	Acting Director: Inshore Fisheries Management (DFFE)
Odwa Dubula	Deputy Director: Inshore Fisheries Management (DFFE)
K Morake	Director: Aquaculture Economic Development (DFFE)
Abongile Ngqongwa	Acting Chief Director: Marine Resource Management (able to join latter part of meeting)

Adoption of Agenda Items

- Additions to the agenda provided by DFFE
 - Supplementary livelihoods (Hamburg area) (Under item 3.b of agenda)
 - WCRL Project estimating local sales (Under item 2.h)

2. Overview of fisheries work conducted by WWF

a. BMZ project update (Abalobi, Alternative and supplementary livelihoods)

A 5-year German funded project looking at the Kogelberg area in working with communities and government to provide alternative and supplementary livelihoods. Feasibility studies have been conducted in the area for the different livelihoods prototypes that can be scaled up nationally and international. Additionally, WWF is also working with Abalobi on the fisher app, marketplace and adding value to fishers catches. DFFE mentioned that their definition of alternative livelihoods encompasses supplementary livelihoods as well.

b. Flanders project update (Abalobi, EbAs)

A 4-year Flanders funded project looking at building resilience for communities and marine ecosystems (Areas: Kogelberg and Hamburg). The project is looking at Ecosystem-based approach to Adaptation projects that looks at nature-based solutions. WWF-SA has started to engaged DFFE on this project regarding aquaculture and abalone ranching. EbAs are a new area of work in the marine space. DFFE explained that there are several sites that have been allocated for abalone ranching, so there is possibility for collaboration, especially the Hamburg area.

Feedback from WWF on the meeting with DFFE around EbAs: Held an inception workshop and scoping exercise on EbAs, but still need to do a rapid vulnerability assessment before choosing EbAs to engage in.

Action: WWF to further engage with DFFE (Beleman and team) and give update on any progress made pertaining to the aquaculture facility in Hamburg.

c. Responsible Fisheries Alliance (Revised RFA and current projects)

The RFA has been in place since 2009 and traditionally consisted of the largest fishing companies and NGOs that worked together to determine innovative solutions that would promote responsible fishing practices. Over the past year and half WWF has been in the process of restructuring the RFA to make it more inclusive and to have more impact within the fishing sector. Examples of RFA projects currently underway that DFFE could collaborate on: 1. Electronic data logbook, 2. Economic analysis of the WCRL, Inshore trawl threshold project for key bycatch species and consolidated ecosystem status report on the west coast to understand what is currently happening.

d. Fish for Good (FIPs: Tuna pole, Rope grown mussel, squid, yellowfin longline, east coast rock lobster)

A Dutch Postcode lottery funded project through the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The aim is to work with all relevant stakeholders, including government, Fishery, NGOs to allow selected Fisheries to improve their sustainability by setting up Fishery Improvement Projects. This is so that some fisheries can apply to be MSC certified, like the tuna pole and rope- grown mussel fishery. Other fisheries that are currently participating, include squid, yellowfin

longline and the east coast rock lobster. Key Improvements planned: 1. Enhance data collection (through observers), 2. Fisheries Management plan, 3. Publishing of annual compliance reports, 4. Develop ETP and habitat management strategies, 5. Support the development of harvest control rules, 6. Support stakeholder engagement.

e. Southern Africa Sustainable Seafood Initiative (WWF-SASSI) assessments

The WWF-SASSI programme has been around for the past 17 years, and it aims to educate consumers on sustainable seafood choices. Conducts annual assessments on selected species. The species are circulated on the SASSI mail list, 24 local species are earmarked for assessment in the year 2021/2022, in the hake demersal longline, line fishery, hand collected, beach seine, and offshore demersal trawl.

Action: Monica to email Andrea (Abernatzeder@environment.gov.za) to discuss the SASSI assessment process especially aquaculture species (in-terms of the different working groups)

Question: What is the current effectiveness of SASSI since it started 17 years ago? The SASSI programme has been put forward for an external review, to assess its strength and weakness by February 2022. There was a paper published in 2017 that looked at sustainability guides and their effectiveness using SASSI as a case study. Link to publication: http://opus.sanbi.org/bitstream/20.500.12143/5737/3/Barendse_et_al_2018_Oceans%20and%20Coastal%20management.pdf

Action: DFFE asked to participate in external review of WWF-SASSI

WWF to send findings of SASSI review once it is available

f. Ropeless fishing study – to reduce whale entanglements (report)

A study with UCT to address whale entanglement with gears that uses ropes, the report is now available and includes measures to mitigate entanglement that has been deployed in the experimental squid fishery. There is interest by the SCRL to consider a version of such mitigations. Communications about findings will be coming out in the coming months. To consider the WCRL sector as well.

Action: WWF (Monica) to share fact sheet of ropeless study once it is available.

g. Lessons learnt from lockdown (report)

A study was conducted that looked at the impact of lockdown on the fishing sector, especially small-scale fisheries communities. Selected community members in four coastal provinces were interviewed as well as the supply chain (incl. WCRL, ECRL and linefish) and on how they dealt with the lockdown restrictions and the lifting of restrictions as well. The report, *inter alia*, showed that co-ops which were properly established and operating (Northern Cape) seemed better able to deal with lockdown restrictions and were better able to rebound once restrictions were lessened, this was unfortunately not the experience in Western Cape where no co-operatives have been formed and no small-scale fishing rights allocated. Link to publication: https://www.wwf.org.za/our_news/news/?36043/Small-scale-fishers-were-hit-hard-under-lockdown

h. WCRL Project estimating local sales

WWF partnered with TRAFFIC and conducted online survey, calls and interviews to find out which restaurants are selling WCRL in Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg as part of the first phase of the project. The draft report was completed and circulated to the task team for comments. Some local sales work from the report was used for the TAC recommendation but there is still more work as the project didn't look at the informal market and online sales. The second phase of the project will address those gaps.

How far is WWF willing to take this project? DFFE would like to be involved in the project and to ensure the working group is also involved so that we can all get the best possible information.

3. Areas for further input/engagement by DFFE – Fisheries Management

i. BMZ project- Ocean and Coast monitoring App development - (demo 10 Sep), Allocation of SSF rights

WWF has commissioned the development of an Ocean and Coast monitoring App that will be piloted in the Kogelberg to monitor poaching, pollution, whale entanglement, fires, environmental parameters by the broader public. This approach is an attempt to bring authorities and the public together to take collective responsibility to protect and manage coastal and marine habitats and to promote co-governance and to assist authorities in resource planning to address various incidents. There will be a demo of the app this Friday for those that would like to join so that WWF can get input in the development of the app. It will include authorities from NSIR, Cape Nature, the Overstrand local municipality, Kleinmond fire brigade.

Action: WWF to send meeting invitation to the aquaculture team and the small-scale fisheries about the app development demo. Team from MCS to attend.

WWF would like to know where DFFE is in terms of Small-scale fishing rights allocation as the BMZ project has a huge component in working with co-ops in utilising the resources. DFFE mentioned that they are currently waiting on court proceeding and anticipate it would take a further year to 18 months for the process to be complete. DFFE in the process of conducting a tender process so that when the court ruling is out the rights allocation process can start. DFFE is happy with a bilateral engagement outside of this meeting as well.

j. Flanders project – aquaculture assistance, gatekeeping to prevent further exploitation of community members

WWF would like to know how they can work with the department in both the Hamburg aquaculture farm, and the ranching for small scale fisheries co-ops so that we can ensure we have the necessary impact. Another issue that has come up is the exploitation of small-scale fishing co-ops through their access to marine resources. DFFE mentioned that this is an area that needs attention and that the department will be reviewing the MLRA next year and that would be an opportunity to introduce regulations that would protect small-scale fishers. WWF-SA indicated that a business mentorship programme would empower communities compared to just one- or two-days training. DFFE mentioned that there is a need for a multifaceted approach in supporting and empowering communities. DFFE also has a strategy and support in place that they are using to engage with co-ops.

Action: WWF to have bilateral meetings with Belemane and team to discuss the way forward and what is possible within the Hamburg area.

Keagan will be involved in the discussions with Craig and team regarding projects related to Hamburg where WWF can assist.

k. RFA – dedicated meeting with DFFE

As part of the revised structure of the RFA, WWF would like to convene annual meetings with senior members of DFFE to discuss and provide feedback on the innovative projects embarked upon by the RFA.

Action: WWF to send TOR and/or presentation to DFFE so that the right senior officials can be nominated for RFA. WWF to further set up a meeting with Sue and team to present the new RFA structure.

l. FIPs – fishery management plans, annual compliance reports, small-scale community fishing areas, reinstate west coast rock lobster FIP, new small pelagic FIP

WWF needs support from DFFE in developing fishery management plans, annual compliance reports, small-scale community fishing areas, reinstate west coast rock lobster FIP, new small pelagic FIP. Especially fisheries that would like to be MSC certified. Is it possible for the department to provide the compliance report and management plans so that WWF can address those gaps in the FIPs?

Action: WWF to have a bilateral meeting with DFFE on the kind of information/reports needed annually. The information required by WWF is information such as number of inspections, VMS data and others.

Action: WWF, DFFE and fisheries stakeholders will hold a discussion on the development of fisheries management plans for fisheries in Fish for Good FIPs in the New Year following the completion of the FRAP process.

DFFE is trying to complete FRAP for the rest of the year and would not have a lot of room for any other ad-hoc work/duties at present but could be considered in new financial year (after March 2022).

m. New SASSI assessments

SASSI assessments relies heavily on information provided by the department and would like to discuss feasible ways in which information can be received timely by WWF. Currently the PAIA process used to get information is taking a long period.

DFFE currently has capacity issues, therefore it is important find alternatives ways through an agreement or MoU/A with WWF, but for now, the PAIA route will have to be used as information is very sensitive.

Action: WWF-SA to formalise relationship with DFFE through a MoU/A

n. EAF

The minister is keen on an EAF where WWF could support, there is a need to have discussion on how WWF can input. There is currently internal discussion/ engagement within DFFE to look at the structure of the EAF and integration of various function. They are currently not in the implementing phase. Once again capacity constraints were raised by the DFFE to conduct this work in current financial year, and noted WWF-SA's willingness to assist.

Action: DFFE will engage with WWF later when they have had internal discussions. This will happen in the new financial year.

o. NORAD– (SWIO Regional programme, 5-year project, Abalobi fisheries data, NPOA-IUU)
A new 5-year regional project funding has been secured to look at unlocking the sustainable blue economy of the South West Indian Ocean. As part of the project it will empower 45 SSF co-ops to engage with government through Masifundise Development Trust. WWF will also partner with Abalobi to improve fisheries data collection for these co-ops. Work will also be conducted to work with government to develop a NPOA-IUU.

4. Conclusion and Way Forward

- p. Need to have bilateral collaboration/meetings with specific directorates
- q. Provide presentation on the new revised RFA structure to DDG
- r. Draft MoU/A to avoid duplication of efforts or delays in obtaining information
- s. Next date for a meeting would ideally be after FRAP (DFFE new financial year)

Meeting Ends