Report by SEAFO Observer (Norway) on the 14th Meeting of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO-XIV),

Swakopmund, 27 – 30 November 2017

The 14th Annual Meeting of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO-XIV) took place in Swakopmund, Namibia, during 27 - 30 Nov. 2017, under the chairmanship of Mr. Dielobaka Ndombele (Angola).

The member countries of SEAFO, Angola, Namibia, the Republic of South Africa, Norway, the European Union, Japan, and South Korea confirmed their commitment to ensuring the sustainable utilization of living marine resources through active regional cooperation and science-based management decisions.

In addition to delegates from the Contracting Parties, the United Kingdom, The Benguela Current Commission (BCC), The Food & Agricultural Organization (FAO), as well as the following organizations observed the meeting: NAMMCO, CCAMLR, NAFO, and NEAFC.

Much of the proceedings were devoted to discussing a report from a SEAFO-seminar held just prior to the Commission meeting. Matters discussed were the possibility of extending SEAFO's Convention Area to cover the South West Atlantic Ocean, staff regulations, biennial commission meetings, etc. Some of the matters discussed will be considered again at a later time.

Furthermore, SEAFO amended the Rules of Procedure for its scientific committee, strengthening its opportunity to seek peer review and independent expert advice. In addition, a protocol for the application of HCRs when stock and fisheries evaluation indicates that exceptional circumstances are occurring, was adopted. Also, with some additional mitigation measures added, a Japanese Notice of Intent for Exploratory Fishing was approved.

The total allowable catch level for the target species of the convention area were agreed upon at the Commission meeting in 2016, with a duration of two years, and thus will not be addressed again until the next SEAFO meeting.

The next Annual Meeting of the SEAFO will be held in Swakopmund, Namibia during 26.–30. November 2018.