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## SOUTH AFRICAN OFFSHORE TRAWL BYCATCH FISHERIES CONSERVATION PROJECT

First Annual Report for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

### Background

The offshore hake trawl sector mainly operates using otter trawls at depths between 110m and 800m on the West and South coasts of South Africa. Fishing activity occurs predominantly on soft sandy substrates and the two most important bycatch species are kingklip (*Genypterus capensis*) and monkfish (*Lophius vomerinus*). To prevent the escalation of fishing effort directed at these two high value species, precautionary catch limits were introduced. The sector also catches significant quantities of angelfish (*Brama brama*), Cape dory (*Zeus capensis*), gurnard (*Chelidonichthys capensis*), horse mackerel (*Trachurus capensis*), jacopever (*Helicolenus dactylopterus*), octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*), panga (*Pterogymnus laniarus*), ribbonfish (*Lepidopus caudatus*), snoek (*Thyrsites atun*) and various skate species.

### Measuring Sustainability

To address the impacts of the South African offshore demersal hake trawl sector on key bycatch species noted above, a Fishery Conservation Project (FCP) between the South African Deep-Sea Trawl Industry Association ([SADSTIA](#)) and the [WWF-SA](#) was launched in 2016 with the objective of improving the [WWF-SASSI](#) Species Assessment outcomes for the relevant bycatch species noted above. The FCP was developed in such a way so as to support the planned work activities of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries ([DAFF](#)) Demersal Scientific Working Group.



Photo Credit: Sea Harvest

## Fishery Conservation Project Overview

The South African Offshore Trawl Bycatch FCP has 10 Principal Stakeholders representing 5 organisations (see ANNEXURE 1) and contains 12 separate activities (see ANNEXURE 2) that the fishery or the government regulator ([DAFF](#)) is responsible to undertake. The FCP is anticipated to run over a period of three years. Key goals for the FCP are the following:

1. Improve data collection and analysis of key bycatch species (or “Non-Target Species”);
2. Develop an initiative to monitor the Non-Target Species applying co-management principles;
3. Compile a guiding document that lays out the major Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) objectives of the fishery;
4. Compile a report on the social and economic impacts of the fishery; and
5. Develop a robust traceability system for the Non-Target Species.

For further information on the FCP and for a schedule of the participating vessels, please see the [SADSTIA](#) website and the [WWF-SASSI](#) website.

## Progress against the Key Goals

During the first year of the project the Principal Stakeholders convened for meetings on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2016, the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 and the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2016. Detailed progress is contained in the Quarterly Reports below:



Quarterly  
Report\_20160421



Quarterly  
Report\_20160726



Quarterly  
Report\_20161206

An overview of progress against the Key Goals of the project is provided below:

### Improve data collection and analysis of key bycatch species

A revised observer protocol was co-developed by CapMarine, UCT and WWF-SA to ensure that the resultant observer data will enable, where relevant, quantifying discards at a species level. Furthermore a presentation by EcoTrust Canada on the electronic monitoring system that they have developed was presented to the Principal Stakeholders (see <http://ecotrust.ca/project/electronic-monitoring/>) to inform a proposal to be made to SADSTIA to trial the use of cameras to observe the discard chute on vessels. Lastly, the DAFF DSWG compiled drafts of 7 replacement yield analyses for bycatch species relevant to the project which were circulated to DAFF DSWG members for review.

### Develop an initiative to monitor the Non-Target Species applying co-management principles

It was agreed that a co-management initiative to monitor the main non-target species needed to be developed which should include recommended implementation of management responses where appropriate. The recommendation from the Principal Stakeholders was that the development of this initiative would take 1 year to inform, 1 year to develop, and 1 year to pilot.

### Compile a guiding document that lays out the major Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) objectives of the fishery Implementation

The Principal Stakeholders mandated WWF-SA to compile the proposed document which would be a framework that consolidates EAF related activities being conducted by DAFF and SADSTIA relevant to the hake offshore trawl sector. Progress against the activities contained in this framework should be periodically reviewed by the DAFF DSWG. WWF-SA is currently collaborating with the Responsible Fisheries Alliance (RFA) to resource the development of the proposed document.

## **Compile a report on the social and economic impacts of the fishery**

SADSTIA was tasked with conducting an interview with Sue Middleton at DAFF to ascertain what type of information should be included in a socio-economic report to ensure that it would be viewed as relevant and credible by DAFF. The results of this interview were circulated and currently SADSTIA and WWF-SA are compiling Terms of Reference for the compilation of a report on the social and economic impacts of the hake offshore trawl sector

## **Develop a robust traceability system for the Non-Target Species**

WWF-SA was tasked with meeting Stuart Parker from SELECTA SEA PRODUCTS to benchmark their traceability system against the WWF Traceability Principles. The benchmarking was conducted and the results will be presented to the Principal Stakeholders to obtain their inputs on the way forward with developing a traceability protocol for the hake offshore trawl sector

## **Conclusion**

The first year of implementation of the SOUTH AFRICAN OFFSHORE TRAWL BYCATCH FISHERIES CONSERVATION PROJECT has seen a significant amount of foundational elements being completed to underpin the implementation of key activities; most notably for actions 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8.

It is envisioned that the second year of the project will see a number of actions being completed based on the ground work done in the first year; most notably actions 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8. This will ensure that activities in the third and final year of the project can be focused on achieving the overall objective of improving the WWF-SASSI assessment outcomes for key bycatch species in the hake offshore trawl sector.

Apart from the positive work done on the workplan actions and activities, the project has also enjoyed significant positive media attention. SADSTIA was interviewed on Cape Talk (see <http://www.capetalk.co.za/articles/13653/conservation-organisations-team-up-to-save-non-target-fish-species>), and WWF-SA was interviewed on the SABC3 Expresso Show (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfsGYrfnOwM>). Furthermore articles were written in, amongst others, the Cape Business News (see <http://www.cbn.co.za/component/k2/deep-sea-trawl-operators-and-wwf-sa-team-up-to-tackle-fishy-issues>), on Intrafish (see <http://www.intrafish.com/news/753600/wwf-south-african-tractors-commit-to-reduce-bycatch-in-hake-fisheries>) and in the SANCOR Newsletter (see <http://sancor.nrf.ac.za/Lists/Announcements/DispForm.aspx?ID=230>).



Photo Credit: Sea Harvest

# ANNEXURE 1

## Principal Stakeholders

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## ANNEXURE 2

### WORKPLAN

#### The South African Offshore Trawl Bycatch Fishery Conservation Project (FCP)

Prepared by: J. Greenstone (WWF-SA Marine Science & Policy Lead), J. Augustyn (Secretary of SADSTIA), T. Reddell (Chairman of SADSTIA)

This Workplan lists improvement actions that the Parties agree will be addressed in this FCP. It supports the accomplishment of selected DAFF planned work activities regarding the hake offshore trawl sector's ecological impacts as identified in the DAFF Demersal Research 2016 document (FISHERIES/2016/MAR/SWG-DEM/02-DAFF Demersal Research 2016). It further follows on the report prepared for the Responsible Fisheries Alliance in March 2015 (Greenstone, 2015) on the SASSI ratings of offshore trawl bycatch species and the subsequent discussions with SADSTIA in April and December 2015.

Item	Action description	Responsibility	Timeframe	SASSI Question Impacted & DSWG Research Activity #:	Budget / Resources
1.	Stakeholder mapping and engagement process whereby key parties are identified and a representative number of rights holders in the sector agree to participate in the FCP. Key parties are those people/organisations who would play an essential role in making improvements in the fishery including government representatives, industry, environmental NGOs and the scientific community.	WWF-SA Lead; SADSTIA	3 months	N/A	2 days WWF-SA Y1.
2.	Quantify discards down to the species level (where possible) for target, <b>Non-Target Species*</b> , and, endangered, threatened, protected, overfished and vulnerable (collectively, <b>ETP**</b> ) species. To accomplish this, the following is envisioned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SADSTIA/CapMarine observer programme collects the appropriate data.</li> <li>A scientist contracted by SADSTIA analyses the data on a periodic basis, e.g. every six months, for at least two years.</li> </ul>	SADSTIA contracting CapMarine with support from DAFF	1 year to implement; ongoing thereafter	SASSI: Q7; Q8; Q10 DSWG: A8, A9, C4	2 days WWF-SA Y1 1 day WWF-SA Y2 1 day WWF-SA Y3 SADSTIA: Included in current R 1 000 000/ annum contract with CapMarine (includes action 3 below)

Item	Action description	Responsibility	Timeframe	SASSI Question Impacted & DSWG Research Activity #:	Budget / Resources
3.	Improved data collection of the main non-target species..				
	<p>a. Improved logbook reporting to facilitate DAFF spatially referencing drag-by-drag data whereby accurate counts of bins per species per drag. To accomplish this, the following is envisioned:</p> <p>(i) Informal interviews with some skippers to get a better understanding re why accurate bins per species per drag are not recorded.</p> <p>(ii) Based on the interviews, come up with a solution that is easy for skippers to implement (e.g.. using “.25”, “.5” or “.75” when referring to a fraction of a bin; and not lumping the Non-Target Species).</p> <p>(iii) Development of a one-page information sheet describing the issue and solution that can be distributed to all skippers in the sector.</p> <p>(iv) Periodic review of a random sample of logbooks after the instructions have been provided to see if the instruction is working.</p>	SADSTIA & WWF-SA with support from DAFF	2 years to implement; ongoing thereafter	SASSI: Q7; Q8 (plus category 1 responses for the respective species)	10 days WWF-SA Y1 5 days WWF-SA Y2 3 days WWF-SA Y3 SADSTIA: Included in current R 1 000 000/ annum contract with CapMarine (includes action 2 above)
	b. Improved observer data on the total catches of these species (including discards).	SADSTIA contracting CapMarine with support from DAFF			
4.	At a minimum, a detailed replacement yield analysis (or a related equivalent analyses) will be undertaken for the Non-Target Species for the sector. The specific analysis conducted will depend on an evaluation of the data available on a species basis and then deciding what assessment methodology is appropriate in light of the available data.	SADSTIA/WWF-SA to track DAFF DSWG completion	3 years (more detailed timeframe per species to be developed)	SASSI: Q13; Q14 (plus category 1 responses for the respective species) DSWG: C7, C11	4 days WWF-SA Y3 SADSTIA: No direct investment required. Management time required for input on this action has been allocated
5.	A co-management or other management-based initiative to monitor the main non-target species and to recommend implementation of management responses where appropriate.	SADSTIA, or SADSTIA to contract UCT/consultant	1 year to develop; 2 years to pilot	SASSI: Q13; Q14 DSWG: C7, C11	5 days WWF-SA Y1 2 days WWF-SA Y2 2 days WWF-SA Y3 SADSTIA: Approximately R 30 000 allocated in current UCT contract with Prof. Colin Attwood. Management time required for input on this action has been allocated.

Item	Action description	Responsibility	Timeframe	SASSI Question Impacted & DSWG Research Activity #:	Budget / Resources
6.	A guiding document that lays out the major EAF objectives / components of the fishery and the work being done on the component/objective (e.g. benthic habitats, Non-Target Species, and ETP species). We recommend this be framed in terms of 5-year objectives that the DAFF DSWG sets for the fishery. Gaps that may be beyond the 5-year objectives will also be noted.	WWF-SA Lead; SADSTIA with support from DAFF DSWG and Hake MWG	1 year to develop; ongoing thereafter	SASSI: Q13; Q14 DSWG: TBD	5 days WWF-SA Y1 2 days WWF-SA Y2 2 days WWF-SA Y3
7.	A report on the social and economic impacts of the fishery, including but not limited to the number of jobs, impact on communities, food security, corporate social investment, etc. There exist and/or are underway a handful of different studies on the social and economic impacts of the fishery and the transformation of the fishery. The idea is to bring into one report these "human dimension" components of the fishery. There would also be a preliminary exercise to identify any gaps in the existing studies towards fulfilment of understanding the "human dimension" for the sector.	SADSTIA to contract consultant; WWF-SA to support proposal drafting and presentation to RFA if SADSTIA requests it.	6 months to develop a proposal; 1 year to complete the report	SASSI: Q14 DSWG: N/A	5 days WWF-SA Y1 1 day WWF-SA Y2 RFA funded project
8.	Traceability protocol.	WWF-SA Lead; SADSTIA	1 year to develop; 1 year to pilot	N/A	5 days WWF-SA Y1 2 days WWF-SA Y2 2 days WWF-SA Y3
9.	Quarterly meetings to track progress against workplan actions and to discuss any issues that have arisen in the quarter.	WWF-SA; SADSTIA	Quarterly	N/A	5 days WWF-SA Y1 5 days WWF-SA Y2
10.	Annual report to the DSWG and DMWG on the progress of the FCP to date, and anticipated priority projects for the following year.	WWF-SA; SADSTIA	Annual	N/A	5 days WWF-SA Y3
11.	Report compilation and presentations as requested by funders.	WWF-SA; SADSTIA	On request	N/A	
12.	Input of relevant FCP outcomes into the SASSI assessments / re-assessments of the South African hake offshore trawl "main non-target species" for the WWF-SASSI list.	WWF-SA	3 years from start of FCP	N/A	15 days WWF-SA Y3

**\*Non-Target Species:** Main bycatch species for the hake offshore trawl sector which are angelfish, Cape dory, gurnard, monkfish, horse mackerel, ribbonfish, jacobever, kingklip, octopus, panga, snoek and various skate species.

**\*\*ETP:** WWF-SA is in the process of developing a comprehensive list of ETP species for the offshore trawl sector. WWF-SA will circulate a draft list for the main stakeholders to comment on in the coming months.

**Reference:**

Greenstone, J., (2015), "Improving the WWF-SASSI Sustainability Rating of Key Non-Target Species from the Hake Offshore Trawl Sector," WWF-SA report to the [Responsible Fisheries Alliance](#), pp