



**Fifth Meeting of the Commission of the
South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement**

Cape Panwa Hotel, Phuket, Thailand

25-29 June 2018

29 June 2018 DSCC intervention

Thank you Mr Chair

We thank Australia for their diligence in proposing and pursuing this proposal, and we thank the Scientific Committee for their hard work and recommendations.

DSCC regrets that SIOFA is missing an opportunity to show the world that Parties are able to act beyond narrow self interest, implement the United Nations resolutions and the precautionary approach, and follow the advice of the Scientific Committee. We regret, Mr Chair, the Scientific Committee's advice was not followed. We also regret that the measure allows fishing in the protected areas. Mr Chair, the Scientific Committee recommended that "fishing with **all gears** were identified as activities that may degrade the scientific and biodiversity value of the areas." Protected areas should be protected.

We are deeply disappointed in the exception for long-line and trap fishing in these areas. We call on the EU and their member States, including Spain and France, and all other States to refrain from authorizing their vessels to fish in these areas, including for deep water sharks and Patagonian toothfish, as we know they contain vulnerable marine ecosystems. There is simply no need, and no justification, to fish there. There is ample science showing that protected areas work, which is why the UNGA, the CBD, through the Aichi Target 11, has emphasized the need for protected areas. We associate ourselves with the intervention of IUCN just delivered.

The measure should have addressed the other 7 areas referred to as "data limited", following the precautionary approach. As was noted by the Scientific Committee in paragraph 186, "VME thresholds have been triggered on these sites and other evidence (e.g. acoustic surveys for some locations) indicating the potential for VME presence and the need to consider precautionary management arrangements until improved information is obtained to assess them under the protocol as BPAs." Deleting the reference to these other areas was also, in our view, an unwarranted departure from the Scientific Committee's advice.

Thank you