

SUPPLEMENT to the Solomon Islands GazetteTuesday 2nd December, 2014.

S.I. No.79

[Legal Notice No. 112]

**FISHERIES ACT 1998
(NO. 6 OF 1998)****FISHERIES (BECHE-DE-MER) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2014**

IN exercise of the powers conferred upon me by section 59 of the Fisheries Act 1998, I make these Regulations –

Citation

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Fisheries (Beche-de-mer) (Amendment No.2) Regulations 2014 and shall commence on the date of publication in the *Gazette*.

Application of
Solomon Islands
National Sea
cucumber Fishery
Management and
Development
Plan

2. The Solomon Islands National Sea Cucumber Fishery Management and Development Plan Fisheries (annexed as **Schedule 1**) shall take effect from commencement of these Regulations.

"Suspension of
Regulation 13A
2009"

3. (1) The Fisheries (Amendment) Regulation 13A 2009* is hereby suspended from 1st December 2014 to 31st March 2015 ("the Open Period").
- (2) During the Open Period, any person who:
- (a) has in his or her possession any beche-de-mer harvested for sale or processes or exports:
- (i) without a license or permit;
- (ii) smaller than the minimum dry length provided in schedule 5 of the National Sea Cucumber Management and Development Plan;
- (iii) prohibited sea cucumber species during a closed fishing period; or

- (b) harvested or harvests beche-de-mer:
 - (i) using any other method prescribed under Article 24 of the National Sea Cucumber Management and Development Plan; or
 - (ii) within a Marine Protected Area; or
- (c) has in his possession a valid license or permit fails to submit:
 - (i) monthly logsheet (Schedule 4); or
 - (ii) Sea Cucumber Export Declaration Form (Schedule 6); or
 - (iii) End of Season holding report (Schedule 7); or
 - (iv) Monthly Buying Summary Report (Schedule 8) of the National Sea Cucumber Management and Development Plan; or
- (d) found to be in breach of his or her license condition;

commits an offence and shall be liable to a fine of not exceeding five hundred thousands dollars (SBD500,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding four (4) months or both".

MADE AT HONIARA this twentieth-eighth day of November, 2014.

HON. ALFRED GHIRO, MP
Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources (Caretaker)

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SCHEDULE 1

Solomon Island National Sea Cucumber Fishery Management and Development Plan

Delegation of Authority

The Director of the MFMR in consultation with FAC may designate in writing persons to act as authorized enforcement officers for this plan.

Approval of Management Plan

Pursuant to the powers and functions vested in the Minister of Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources under Part II section 10 of the Fishery Act 1998, the Director, having regards to scientific, economic, cultural, environmental and other relevant considerations, it has determined that sea cucumber fishery:

- a. is important to the national interest; and
- b. requires management and development plan for effective conservation and optimum utilization,

and therefore, authorized the sea cucumber fishery as a designated fishery and hereby approved the National Sea Cucumber Fisheries Management and Development Plan 2014.

Dated this first day of October, 2014.

HON. ALFRED GHIRO
Minister, Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

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Part I. Preliminary Information**1. Title**

The Title of this plan is the Solomon Islands National Sea Cucumber Fishery Management and Development Plan, there after referred to as "Sea Cucumber Plan"

2. Application

The Fisheries Act 1998 Part II Section 7 provides an enabling legislation in which the Sea Cucumber Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with.

The Sea Cucumber Plan supplements, and does not in any way override the provisions of the Act or regulations promulgated under the Act. All activities subject to the Sea Cucumber Plan shall be subject to the applicable provisions of all Acts and Regulations of Solomon Islands.

- a) The Sea Cucumber Plan applies to all animals belonging to the Class Holothuroidea, commonly known as sea cucumbers, and to the sea cucumber fishery and includes all activities associated with the collection, harvesting, processing, storage, transporting, buying, selling and exporting of sea cucumbers or beche-de-mer products from Solomon Islands fishery waters.
- b) Schedules to the Sea Cucumber Plan form part of the Plan and shall be read together with the Plan.
- c) The Sea Cucumber Plan is to be interpreted in accordance with clause 4 of this Plan, and Section 2, of the Fisheries Act 1998.
- d) Where there is inconsistency between the Plan and the Fisheries Act, the Fisheries Act shall prevail.

- e) The Sea Cucumber Plan shall have force or effect upon approval by the Director of Fisheries and the Minister of Fisheries in accordance with section 14, subsection (2) and (5) and upon publication in the *Gazette* in accordance with section (6) of the Act and the management measures and fines, penalties and sanctions as well as licensing and enforcement powers are deemed to have legal status of regulations made under the Fisheries Act 1998.

3. Purpose

The purpose of the Sea Cucumber Plan is to provide ecological sustainable management and development of this fishery including the establishment of effective and enforceable regulations for the Solomon Islands Sea Cucumber Fishery.

4. Interpretation

Unless otherwise expressed, words and expressions used in the Plan shall have the same meanings as defined in the Fisheries Act 1998. Where there is inconsistency between the Plan and the Fisheries Act, the Fisheries Act shall prevail.

“Act” means the Fisheries Act 1998.

“Beche-de-mer” means the processed, boiled, smoked and dried sea cucumber product also known as trepan.

“Beche-de-mer Export License” means a license to export sea cucumber product issued by the Director of MFMR

“Sea Cucumber” means all animals belonging to the class Holothuroidea whether processed or not processed.

“Sea Cucumber Processing License” means a license to process sea cucumber products issued by the Provincial Government.

“Sea Cucumber Export License” means a license to export sea cucumber products issued by the Director of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources.

“Director” means the Director of Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources appointed pursuant to section 36 of the Act.

“Fisheries Advisory Council”, hereafter referred to as “the FAC”, means the current advisory Council established under Fisheries Act 1998, Section 5 to provide advice to the Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources on fishery management issues.

“Licensing Committee” means the licensing committee established under the Fisheries Act 1998.

“Minister” refers to the Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources.

“MFMR” means Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources.

“Precautionary Approach” means setting down restrictions to control harvesting in absence of comprehensive scientific data. These restrictions may include seasonal and area closures or other controls on species or fishing effort.

“Sustainability” is the capacity of a fishery system to absorb shocks while still maintaining function, and to reorganize following disturbance. Using this definition, the goals of management are to: (i) prevent the fishery system from moving into undesirable configurations such as over exploitation or decreasing stocks, and (ii) nurture and preserve the elements that enable the system to renew and reorganize itself following external stresses and disturbance. Implicit in this definition of sustainability is the tight coupling between the ecosystem and society, and the need to include both elements of the fishery system in management.

Part II. Sea Cucumber Fishery

5. Biology

There are over a thousand types or species of sea cucumbers distributed throughout the world's oceans. Most sea cucumbers move slowly across sandy areas of lagoons (or sea floor) where they play an important role in cleaning the sea floor. They feed on dead plant and animal material (detritus) in the sand. Most sea cucumbers have separate sexes. Some species, like the sandfish, are relatively fast growing and reach reproductive size within a year or more but take another two years to reach an acceptable market size. Other species grow more slowly with lifespan of between 5 and 15 years. For reproduction to be successful many eggs have to be fertilized and this means that large numbers of sea cucumbers have to be present in the same place. Fertilized eggs hatch (planktonic larval stages) and drift with ocean currents from 2 to 5 weeks before settling on the sea floor as juvenile sea cucumbers. Adults appear not to move very far from the areas in which they settle.

6. Target species

The table below list common trades, scientific, and local names for sea cucumber in Solomon Islands.

Common	Scientific	Local
Amberfish	<i>Thelenota anax</i>	
Black spotted sea cucumber (Ripple fish or Flowerfish)	<i>Pearsonothuria graeffei</i> <i>Holothuria whiumaei</i>	
Black teatfish	<i>Stichopus vastus</i>	Black susu
Brown curryfish	<i>Bohadschia vitiensis</i>	
Brown sandfish	<i>Bohadschia similis</i>	
Brown spotted sandfish (Chalk fish)	<i>Stichopus hermanni</i>	
Curryfish	<i>Actinopyga palauensis</i>	
Deepwater blackfish	<i>Actinopyga echinites</i>	
Deepwater trunkfish	<i>Holothuria fuscopunctata</i>	
Golden sandfish	<i>Holothuria scabra</i> var <i>versicolor</i>	
Greenfish	<i>Stichopus chloronotus</i>	Grenfis
Hairy blackfish	<i>Actinopyga miliaris</i>	
Leopadfish/Tigerfish	<i>Bohadschia orgus</i>	
Lolly fish	<i>Holothuria atra</i>	
Pinkfish	<i>Holothuria edulis</i>	
Prickly redfish	<i>Thelenota ananas</i>	
Red snakefish	<i>Holothuria flavomaculata</i>	
Sandfish	<i>Holothuria scabra</i>	
Selenka's sea cucumber (Peanutfish)	<i>Stichopus horrens</i>	
Slender sea cucumber	<i>Holothuria impatiens</i>	
Snakefish	<i>Holothuria coluber</i>	
Stonefish	<i>Actinopyga lecanora</i>	
Surf redfish	<i>Actinopyga mauritiana</i>	
Tigertail sea cucumber	<i>Holothuria hilla</i>	
White snakefish	<i>Holothuria leucospilota</i>	
White teatfish	<i>Holothuria fuscogilva</i>	White susu
Red Snakefish	<i>Holothuria flavomaculata</i>	

7. Status of the fishery

Beche-de-mer is produced from sea cucumbers by boiling, cleaning, smoking and drying. The use of salt and green pawpaw to aid the processing of white teatfish and sandfish is practiced by some fishers. Once processed, fishers sell their beche-de-mer to a village buyer who then ships the product to Honiara to be sold to exporters. Some fishers sell their catch directly to exporters in Honiara.

The beche-de-mer fishery is a multi-species fishery based on the exploitation of species belonging to aspidochirote genera *Actinopyga*, *Bohadschia*, *Holothuria*, *Pearsonothuria*, *Stichopus* and *Thelenota*. The fishery draws its strength from individual fishers and their families who harvest and process sea cucumber into beche-de-mer. Harvesting is usually done by snorkeling, free diving or by gleaning at low tide. In the last decade, diving at night using torches, beche-de-mer "bombs" made of a lead or concrete weight with a steel barb protruding from the base, hookah, and more recently dredge nets have aided the exploitation of these resources. The use of these equipment types has significantly increased the likelihood of local over-harvesting, while the use of hookah and scuba has claimed many lives in the Western Province.

There were no controls on species harvested, numbers or sizes of animals caught, harvesting methods, or the number of exports. A short-lived ban on taking sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*) was introduced in 1998 but this was repealed in 2000. The distribution of benefits from the fishery was highly skewed toward exporters. Consistent with this absence of management, the fishery was in crisis by the end of 2005. Catches fell from 615 t and 715 t in 1991 and 1992 respectively to approximately 100 t. Hidden within this decline in total catch was an increase in the diversity of species taken from 22 to 32 species, and a shift toward collecting lower-value species which, in 2005, made up the great bulk of the catch.

The Government of the Solomon Islands closed the beche-de-mer fishery on 1 December 2005. The severe over-exploitation of sea cucumber stocks meant that a complete closure was the only rational basis for rebuilding stocks. On 20 April 2007 the fishery was reopened in response to hardships being experienced in fishing communities in the wake of the 2 April 2007 earthquake and tsunami. The fishery was reopened with the same unconstrained fishing that caused its decline prior to the closure.

8. Socio economics

In the absence of effective management the fishery will not survive sustainably. The collapse of the beche-de-mer fishery has had profound consequences for coastal communities in the Solomon Islands. Beche-de-mer is an important and quick source of cash in isolated communities. The role the fishery plays as a social and economic safety net is readily apparent during periods of social unrest, particularly in 1999–2001.

The collapse of the beche-de-mer fishery will increase poverty and social exclusion in some of the poorest section of Solomon Island society. Coastal communities will be more vulnerable to a range of external threats and have a diminished capacity to adapt to changing social and environmental circumstances. Development of appropriate and enforceable management plans and regulations at local levels and the enabling of Provincial and National legislation to support them is a priority area for the MFMR. In recognition of the central role beche-de-mer fisheries play, future management will place greater emphasis on reducing the vulnerability of fishing communities than on attempting to optimize biological yield.

9. Ecosystem

The beche-de-mer trade has had environmental impacts. In areas where product is produced by boiling or smoking, mangrove forest is often deforested as fuel for boiling and smoking sea cucumber. Estimates have been made that 10 tonnes of wood is needed to produce one tonne of beche-de-mer.

Sea cucumber processing also results in the production of stick water, which contains a toxin (holothurine) that originates from the boiling of holothurian skin. In other countries, the release of stickwater directly into the marine environment has resulted in fish kills in shallow coastal areas. Other potential environmental impacts of beche-de-mer harvesting are poorly understood. All sea cucumbers extract bacteria and organic matter from bottom sediments and some are responsible for bioturbation and oxygenation of the sea floor. Intensive collection cause changes to the condition and nature of seafloor sediments with unknown impacts on other resources. Experience elsewhere (e.g. PNG) suggests that absence of sea cucumbers resulted in algal mats covering the sea floor and over growth of coral by algae. Illegal fishing methods, especially the use of bottom trawls, also damage the sea bed and other species.

Part III: Authorities, Roles and Responsibilities**10. Community Roles**

Marine tenure ownership remains with individual communities, therefore under community management plans and by-laws, individual community are to manage their sea cucumber resources consistent with this sea cucumber plan.

11. Provincial Government

Subject to the provisions of the Act and Provincial Government Act, each Provincial Government shall, in consultation with the Director:

- (a) Have primary responsibility for the conservation, management, development and sustainable use of the reef, inshore and fresh water fisheries within its waters,
- (b) Prepare and keep under review a plan for the management and development of fisheries in its provincial waters,
- (c) Develop Ordinances not inconsistent with the Act or regulations,
- (d) Control processing and exports of sea cucumber products from their respective Provinces.

12. Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) role in the management and development of the sea cucumber fishery of Solomon Islands will be to:

- (a) Regulate the sea cucumber fishery through policy and management to ensure the long term sustainable development of this industry, which would include the provisions for mandatory regulations that can control or monitor collection, harvesting, processing, storage, transporting, buying, selling and exporting of sea cucumbers or beche-de-mer products from Solomon Islands fishery waters.

- (b) Assess and review sea cucumber processing and export license applications;
- (c) Ensure stakeholders participation in the management and development of the fishery;
- (d) Provide recommendations to Provincial Governments and Communities on sea cucumber harvestable quotas and/or open and closed harvest seasons at the species level;
- (e) Provide technical information and advice to the Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC);
- (f) Establish an ongoing program for monitoring, surveillance and compliance of measures stipulated under the Sea Cucumber Plan and the Fisheries Act 1998.
- (g) Plan and conduct or oversee sea cucumber resource assessment and review scientific efforts to support the sustainable development and management of the sea cucumber fishery;
- (h) Provide annual reports on the status of the sea cucumber resources to the FAC and stakeholders;
- (i) Assist, and/or facilitate the development of Provincial and/or Community sea cucumber resource management plans or community based fisheries management plans;
- (j) Establish a program for training in sea cucumber processing, product development and marketing, and
- (k) Oversee the implementation and revision of the National Sea Cucumber Fishery Management and Development Plan.

13. Fisheries Advisory Council

The Fisheries Advisory Council shall advise the Minister on Policy matters relating to sea cucumber fisheries management, development and sustainable use; taking into consideration relevant research or information that are available.

14. Sea Cucumber Steering Committee

The Beche-de-mer Management Steering Committee shall be responsible to oversee the implementation of this management plan. The Beche-de-mer Management Steering Committee will be chaired by the Director and comprised by the Deputy Directors, representatives from the Provincial Government, Non-Government Organisation, Industry and Fisher groups.

Part IV Fisheries Management Objectives**15. Fisheries management**

The primary management objectives of this fishery plan are:

- a) To ensure the fishery is ecologically and sustainably managed;
- b) To ensure that harvesting and processing of sea cucumber has minimal impact on the marine environment;
- c) To strengthen ongoing monitoring programs to ensure effective monitoring and collection of both scientific information and export data; and
- d) To optimize sustainable economic returns from the fishery to industry, communities and resource owners.

16. Principal ways to achieve the objectives

The measures applied to achieve the objectives of the Sea Cucumber Plan include the following:

- a) Supporting the closure of the entire fishery waters or specified areas within the lagoon and surrounding reefs to fishing to allow sea cucumber populations to recover from the pressure of fishing;
- b) Establish licensing arrangements to control and monitor processing and exports;
- c) Apply restrictions on particular fishing techniques or methods;
- d) Apply restrictions on particular sea cucumber species, including size or weight limitations;
- e) Establish an ongoing program of catch and export data collection and of collecting scientific information to support management of the sea cucumber fishery;
- f) Establish an effective monitoring and enforcement system to ensure compliance with the Plan, licenses and conditions of licenses;
- g) To promote and encourage the management of the sea cucumber fishery at Provincial and community levels;

17. Consultative process

The Director shall organize consultations with key stakeholders (Provincial Governments, communities, sea cucumber collectors, processors, buyers and exporters, Non Government Organizations (NGOs) with an interest in the conservation, development and management of the sea cucumber fishery) in the sea cucumber fishery at least once in each calendar year or as may be necessary. The scope of the consultations shall include matters relating to:

- a. The management of sea cucumber fishery including licensing and conditions of licenses;

- b. Provincial Governments and/or community sea cucumber fishery management initiatives;
- c. The development of fishing and processing including investment policies, financial arrangements and projects to promote sustainable sea cucumber processing and marketing;
- d. Social-economic or environmental impacts of sea cucumber fishing and processing;
- e. Awareness and extension programs;
- f. Other such issues related to the sea cucumber fishery.

Part V. Management Measures

18. Prohibition against processing or exports of sea cucumber without a license

Licenses shall be issued to individuals or companies wishing to process sea cucumber into beche-de-mer product or to export beche-de-mer product. License conditions will be used to monitor collection, purchase, sale, transport, storing, packaging and export of product. License fees will apply as prescribed by Fisheries Regulation as a means of recovering cost against Government expenditure for the sustainable management of the sea cucumber fishery. License fees shall be paid annually or pro-rata depending on opening seasons. Fisheries or collecting of sea cucumber will not require a license.

The following licenses shall apply:

1. **Beche-de-mer Export License:**
Applicable to persons who intend to purchase, transport, hold/store sea cucumber for export from Solomon Islands. This license is not transferable; and shall expire on one licensing period and may be renewed. The License is subject to a fee as prescribed in the Fisheries Regulation. Beche-de-mer export licenses are issued by the Director of Fisheries. The maximum number of Beche-de-mer Export Licenses to be issued in any licensing period shall be capped at 15 with 10 of these reserved for Solomon Island citizens. An export Total Allowable Catch by species and area (Province) shall apply for each export license.

2. **Sea Cucumber Processing License:**

Applicable to Solomon Island citizens who intend to process sea cucumber with Provincial areas. Licenses are issued by Provincial Governments Province from which sea cucumbers are collected and processed into Beche-de-mer. The Sea Cucumber Processing License shall be issued by individual sea cucumber species or product to be purchased, processed and sold. The license is subject to a species quota and a fee of 10% of the export value of the product. The maximum number of licenses to be issued in a given open season shall depend on the number of species for which the license holder wishes to purchase from local suppliers and exported.

- a. The processing of sea cucumber for commercial purposes, without authorization by the relevant Provincial Government, issued in the form of a license, is hereby prohibited;
- b. The export of sea cucumber or beche-de-mer, without authorization by the MFMR, issued in the form of a license, is hereby prohibited;
- c. Any person who intends to process sea cucumber for commercial purposes shall first submit an application to the relevant Provincial Government, for a *Sea Cucumber Processing License*;
- d. Any person who intends to export sea cucumber for commercial purposes shall first submit an application to the Director, for a *Sea Cucumber Export License*).

19. **Procedure for invitations to apply for processing or export licenses**

- a. The Director shall issue an invitation to all persons, business or entities intending to export beche-de-mer for commercial purposes, to submit an application for a *Beche-de-mer Export License*.
- b. With regards to processing sea cucumbers, the Provincial Government shall issue an invitation to all persons, business or entities intending to process sea cucumber for commercial purposes, to submit an application for a *Sea Cucumber Processing License*.

- c. The invitation to apply for licenses shall be published in local newspaper or advertised on Television of general circulation and advertising in Solomon Islands for a period of one month.
- d. The Publication of the invitation to apply shall state the following:-
 - i. the type of license;
 - ii. the application fee;
 - iii. the license fee;
 - iv. background information required by the Director;
 - v. locations in Solomon Islands where application forms may be obtained;
 - vi. locations in Solomon Islands where applications must be submitted;
 - vii. the final date for submission of applications.

20. License Applications

- a. Applications for Sea Cucumber Processing License or Beche-de-mer Export License shall be submitted in the form to be prescribed.
- b. The applicants shall ensure that the form is completed, and that all information requested is adequately provided.
- c. No application shall be accepted from a person under the age of 18 years.
- d. Applications must be accompanied by the application fee prescribed in *Schedule 1*.
- e. The payment and acceptance of the appropriate application fee does not constitute approval of the application. The payment of application fees shall not be refundable.
- f. All applications must be submitted by the due date as specified in the invitation to apply for licenses. Any late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

- g. Upon receipt of applications for *Beche-de-mer Export Licenses* the MFMR Licensing Committee shall review the application, and shall make a determination and the Director shall communicate such determination to the applicant within the period of 30 days.
- h. The MFMR shall issue the license to the successful applicants no later than 30 days after the applicants have been informed of the outcome of her/his application, and after the payment of applicable license fee prescribed in *Schedule 1*.

21. Criteria for issuance of licenses

- a. In determining whether or not to issue a *Sea Cucumber Export License* to an applicant, the MFMR shall take into consideration matters, including but not limited to the following:
 - i. whether the applicant is registered with (Foreign Investment Board, or Ministry of Commerce) in the Solomon Islands and the date of registration;
 - ii. the management structure and nature of the applicants corporation, business, association or entity;
 - iii. anticipated capital contributions, revenue and expenditure and whether generated income will be invested in Solomon Islands;
 - iv. the level of beneficial ownership of the corporation, business, association or entity by citizens of the Solomon Islands;
 - v. whether the applicant gives employment preferences to citizens of the Solomon Islands;
 - vi. whether the applicant will provide training for citizens of the Solomon Islands for management positions or other levels or training in adequate processing methods for sea cucumbers;

- vii. the prices the applicant will be offering to local sea cucumber processors;
 - viii. whether the applicant has storage facilities which are adequate and secure and allow inspection officers to perform her/his duties;
 - ix. any applicants history of non-cooperation and compliance with Fisheries regulations, conservation and management measures imposed by the MFMR;
 - x. whether the applicant has well established connection with buyers at overseas markets;
 - xi. whether the applicant has complied with the relevant laws of the Solomon Islands; any history of applicants operation in Provinces or Solomon Islands;
 - xii. Solomon Island nationals that apply shall be given priority over foreigners.
- b. In determining whether or not to issue a *Sea Cucumber Processing License* to an applicant, the Provincial Government may take into consideration matters, including but not limited to the following:
- i. whether the applicant is registered with (Ministry of Commerce) in the Solomon Islands and the date of registration;
 - ii. the management structure and nature of the applicants corporation, business, association or entity;
 - iii. the purpose, scope and objectives of the applicant, corporation, business, association or entity;
 - iv. the processing methods the applicant will use and disposal of waste product;
 - v. the prices the applicant will be offering to local sea cucumber harvesters;

- vi. whether the applicant has processing facilities which are adequate and allow inspection officers to perform her/his duties;
 - vii. any applicants history of co-operation and compliance with conservation and management measures imposed by Provincial Governments and MFMR;
 - viii. whether the applicant has been issued business licenses by Provincial Governments;
- c. Processing licenses are restricted for citizens of Solomon Islands living in Solomon Island;
 - d. The Provincial Government may review all the applications against these considerations, and determine the applicants that best meet the criteria, and the Provincial Government shall advise the applicants concerned on the outcome of the license application process.

22. Conditions of License

- a. All licenses issued shall, in addition to the conditions set out in *schedule 2*, be further subject to the following conditions:
 - i. licenses shall not be issued unless the required fees are paid;
 - ii. sea cucumber export licenses are not transferable;
 - iii. the licensee shall not hold more than one sea cucumber export license at any one time. This restriction applies to any manner of holding, whether as a legal holder, a beneficial holder, a part holder or by the use of any nominee;
 - iv. the licensee will allow and assist any authorized enforcement officer to carry out his/her duties including, the inspection of processing, packing and export facilities, consignments destined for export, inspection of reporting log forms, taking photographs and collection of specimen/s if necessary;
 - v. the licensee shall not directly or indirectly be involved in the harvest of sea cucumber.

23. Revocation of Processing or Export License

The MFMR may revoke a *Beche-de-mer Export License* where the license holder:

- a. has violated, or is unable to comply with the conditions of the license;
- b. has been convicted of any offence under the fisheries laws and these Plan;
- c. is a repeated offender.

24. Species Prohibitions

- a. It shall be prohibited for any person to:
 - i. possess dried sea cucumber smaller than the minimum dry lengths provided in *schedule 5*;
 - ii. export dried sea cucumber smaller than the minimum dry lengths provided in *schedule 5*;
 - iii. collect, possess, process or export sea cucumber species which are not on the list of species permitted for processing and export;
 - iv. collect, possess, process or export sea cucumber species which has been declared as endangered or prohibited from harvest or export or as protected sea cucumber species in Solomon Islands.
- b. The serving for public consumption on premises of sea cucumber during closed seasons is prohibited.

25. Gear prohibitions

- a. No person shall harvest sea cucumber in any other manner, except;
 - i. by hand picking;
 - ii. either through free diving, or wading, or
 - iii. only during daylight hours.
- b. All other methods of harvesting of sea cucumber, other than as provided under subsection (a), are hereby prohibited.

26. Sea Cucumber Fishing Period

- a. The MFMR may declare the whole or any part of the year to be 'sea cucumber open fishing period' with regards to specific or general sea cucumber fishing areas;
- b. When declaring open fishing seasons the MFMR will provide a list of sea cucumber species that are permitted to be harvested in a given area or open fishing season;
- c. The MFMR and the relevant Provincial Government/s shall give public notice of the period declared for "sea cucumber open fishing period", and the restrictions placed on the harvesting, processing and disposal of sea cucumbers.

28. Data Collection

- a. All licensed Sea cucumber Processors and Beche-de-mer Exporters shall complete and submit a monthly log sheet detailing, the quantity (total numbers and weight) of sea cucumber by species purchased or received from any person, community or Province on a monthly basis in accordance with the prescribed forms in *schedule 4*.
- b. All Processor log forms shall be submitted to Provincial Governments and all Exporter log forms shall be submitted to the Director by the seventh day of the month following month of reporting (e.g. submit by the 7th of June when reporting for May).

29. Export Prohibitions and Requirements

- a. The export of sea cucumber for personnel consumption is limited to 2kgs (all species) dried product per person and may be permitted only during opening season when harvesting is allowed.
- b. The export of sea cucumber for research purposes is limited to 2kgs (all species) dried product per person and may be permitted only during opening season when harvesting is allowed. There will be no export for no-commercial purposes (research) during closures except when authorized permission is granted from the Director of Fisheries.
- c. The export of parts of, or damaged sea cucumber is prohibited;
- d. Prior to the export of any consignment of sea cucumber, the License holder is required to file with the Director a "*Sea Cucumber Export Declaration Form*," (schedule 6) detailing the source of product, species, quantity, export destination and value of the product at the species level.
- e. The export of sea cucumber for commercial purposes shall require an export permit issued by MFMR (or Director).
- f. The export license holder is required to:
 - i. pack the sea cucumber separately by species; and
 - ii. clearly label the containers with the species name, quantity of the product, and the licence number of the exporter.
- g. All sea cucumber destined for export shall be brought to a central inspection point or a nominated place by MFMR for inspection 7 working days before export.
- h. After the inspection of the consignment MFMR will lock up and be the custodian of the keys until the consignment is exported.

30. **Sea Cucumber Aquaculture and Other Sea Cucumber Products**

- a. No person shall carry out any activities, or related activities, to produce sea cucumber by hatchery technology, or sea cucumber ranching, without a *Sea Cucumber Aquaculture License*, issued by the Director, in the form to be prescribed.
- b. No person shall carry out any activities, or related activities, including harvesting, processing or exports of sea cucumber for products such as pharmaceuticals, aphrodisiac or cosmetic or any other non food products, without authorization issued by the Director, in the form to be prescribed.
- c. Any person who intends to carry out the activities in 31(a) or (b), shall first submit an application to the Director for Authorization.
- d. An application for a Authorization may, at the discretion of the Director, be accompanied by the following:
 - i. proposal outlining the proposed operations and its objectives,
 - ii. goals to be achieved, the types of activities the operation shall undertake,
 - iii. type of species to be harvested and source of stock,
 - iv. site of proposed operation
 - v. monthly or yearly production
 - vi. an evaluation of environmental impacts, and procedures the operation shall undertake to avoid detrimental environmental impacts.
 - vii. business plan, indicators to measures the success of the operation and other information as may be required by the Director.

31. **Precautionary Measures**

- a. Where the MFMR believes that sea cucumber stocks in the waters of the Solomon Islands or any particular Province is under stress or threat, the MFMR may take precautionary management measures to protect those stocks. These measures may include:

- i. declaring the closure of whole or any part of the Solomon Islands waters from harvesting sea cucumber for a duration of time;
- ii. prohibiting the capture, processing and export of certain species of sea cucumber;
- iii. imposing other restrictions on activities that may have adverse impact on sea cucumber.

32. End of Season Holding Report

- a. Any Sea Cucumber Export License who still has stocks of beche-de-mer after a Sea cucumber fishing period closes must submit an End of Seas Holding Report as in *Schedule 7* to the Director within 5 working days which will be verified by the Director.
- b. The Director shall authorize only a "one-of" export for any Sea Cucumber Export Licensee within 30 days after a Sea cucumber fishing period closes.

33. Community Beche-de-mer Management Plans

- a. Communities can have their own Community Beche-de-mer Management Plans to manage their sea cucumber stock.
- b. Community Beche-de-mer Management Plans must be approved and by the Director and the Provincial Executive.
- c. Community Beche-de-mer Management Plans shall apply to an area no greater than the extent of the customary rights of relevant community and in any case shall not extend beyond the outer edge of the reef or fringing and Provincial waters in which such rights are exercised and such area shall be clearly demarcated in the Plan.
- d. Each Community Beche-de-mer Management Plan shall be accompanied by a written consent of relevant customary rights holders.

- e. Community Beche-de-mer Management Plans must include but not limited to:
- i. current stock status of sea cucumber stocks,
 - ii. regulatory measures including harvest gears,
 - iii. allowable species to be harvested,
 - iv. maximum size limits as specified in this Plan,
 - v. Total Allowable Catch and/or Quota for a specified period of time,
 - vi. duration and or specific period of validity and
 - vii. specific buyer in Honiara for MFMR's monitoring.
- f. Where assessment and review of any existing Community Fisheries Management Plan shows that the management measures, powers and/or authorities are sufficiently ineffective to secure management of the fisheries resources or compliance with management measures, the Director, Provincial Executive and relevant community shall consult with a view to revising the Plan. Where no appropriate solution is identified, or where such Plan is inconsistent with other conservation and management measures, the Plan may be cancelled by the Director by notice in the *Gazette*.

Part VI. General

34. Review and Amendments

- a. The Director shall, conduct an analysis of the conservation and management measures set out in this Sea Cucumber Plan, and determine whether the Plan should be reviewed. The Sea Cucumber Plan may be reviewed upon the written approval of the Director.
- b. In reviewing the sea cucumber fishery plan the Director shall have particular regard to, amongst others;
 - i. the objectives of the Act and this Sea Cucumber Plan;
 - ii. the effectiveness of the conservation and management measures the effectiveness of the data collection and monitoring programs;

- iii. the status of the stocks, including changes in yield, species and size composition or distribution;
 - iv. benefits to communities
 - v. the status and economic viability of the fishery
 - vi. the appropriateness of fees and charges.
- c. Having conducted the review, the Director shall make recommendations to the FAC and Minister as to the continued management of the sea cucumber fishery. In particular the Director may make recommendations regarding the amendment, revocation or continuation of the sea Cucumber Plan.
- d. The Director shall consult with key stakeholders prior to making any recommendation to the FAC and Minister as to the result of the review.
- e. The MFMR may revise and amend the Schedules as necessary.
- f. Any proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Minister and after reviewing proposed amendments and agreeing with the amendments, the Minister would approve the revised plan.
- g. Any amendments or revisions to this Plan will be made public.

Schedule 1: Fees

Sea Cucumber Processing License Application fee:	SBD100
Sea Cucumber Export License Application fee:	SBD100
Sea Cucumber Processing License fee	SBD 50,000
Sea Cucumber Export License Annual fee	SBD 200,000
Sea Cucumber Export Permit fee	SBD 200
Sea Cucumber Export Permit fee for Consumption only	SBD 200

All fees are non-refundable

**Schedule 2: Conditions for Sea Cucumber for Sea Cucumber Processing
License RESTRICTED PRACTICES**

As License holder, I understand that:

1. I must not be involved in any fishing activities or provide fishing gears such as boats, outboard engine or diving gears to fishers for collecting sea cucumbers.
2. I must not trade any beche-de-mer to any un-licensed Sea Cucumber Exporter,
3. I must not purchase sea cucumber from Provinces/communities not specified in my License;
4. I must not process any species that are smaller than the live forms as specified by *schedule 4*.
5. I must not pack or trade undersize, broken or damaged beche-de-mer.
6. I may not purchase sea cucumbers collected from areas established by national or local governments as reserves, parks, sanctuaries, or sites of archaeological importance.
7. I must provide true, complete and accurate information in the forms provided for by MFMR or Provincial Government;
8. I must declare all current beche-de-mer in stock to the MFMR or Provincial Government within 14 days before the end of the specified licensing period.
9. I must provide true and accurate information on the beche-de-mer packing log sheet and submit to MFMR on a timely basis.
10. Upon request, I must present my license to any authorized officer;
11. Upon request, I must allow my processing facility or packaged consignments of sea cucumbers to be inspected by any authorized officer;
12. I am required to report any changes in my address to the Provincial Government/Director of MFMR within seven (7) days of any change;
13. Provincial Government may suspend or revoke my license if I do not comply with the terms and conditions of this license, and I may not renew a revoked license for one year from the date of revocation.

Schedule 3: Conditions for Beche-de-mer Export License RESTRICTED PRACTICES

As License holder, I understand that:

1. I must not be involved in any fishing activities or provide fishing gears such as boats, outboard engine or diving gears to fishers for collecting sea cucumbers.
2. I must not trade or purchase any beche-de-mer from any un-licensed processor not specified in the license.
3. I must not purchase, store, retain, sell, expose for sell or be in possession of or export sea cucumber from Provinces/communities during closed sea cucumber fishing periods.
4. I must not export any species that are smaller than the dried forms as specified by *schedule 4*.
5. I must not pack or export broken or damaged sea cucumber.
6. I must provide true, complete and accurate information in the forms provide for by MFMR.
7. I must declare all current beche-de-mer in stock to the MFMR within 14 days before the end of the specified open season.
8. I must provide true and accurate information on the beche-de-mer packing logs sheet and submit to MFMR not less than 48hrs for consideration to issue an export permit.
9. MFMR may refuse to issue an export permit if I provide misleading, false information or I do not declare all sea cucumber intended for export.
10. I will be subject to export permit fees;
11. I will provide training or assistance in appropriate sea cucumber processing and packaging when requested.
12. Upon request, I must present my license to any authorized officer.
13. Upon request, I must allow my catch, storage facility or packaged consignments of sea cucumbers intended for exports to be inspected by any authorized officer.
14. I am required to report any changes in my address to the Director of MFMR within seven (7) days of any change.
15. MFMR may suspend or revoke my license if I do not comply with the terms and conditions of this license, and I may not renew a revoked license for one year from the date of revocation.

Schedule 5: Minimum harvest sizes (wet length) and minimum purchase and export size (dry length)

Common & Trade name	Initial	Scientific name	Size Restrictions	
			Live length (cm)	Dry Length (cm)
Value Group H – High Grade Species				
White teatfish (White susu)	WTF	<i>Holothuria fuscogilva</i>	35	15
Sandfish (Sanfis)	SF	<i>Holothuria scabra</i>	25	10
Black teatfish (Black susu)	BTF	<i>Holothuria whitmaei</i>	30	15
Greenfish (Frenfis)	GF	<i>Stichopus Chloronotus</i>	20	10
Curryfish	CF	<i>Stichopus hermanni</i>	35	15
Peanutfish/Dragonfish	PNF	<i>Stichopus horrens</i>	15	10
Prickly redfish (Pineapplefish)	PRF	<i>Thelenota ananas</i>	35	15
Stonefish	STF	<i>Actinopyga lecanora</i>	20	10
Hairy blackfish	HBF	<i>Actinopyga miliaris</i>	20	10
Surf redfish (Surfred)	SRF	<i>Actinopyga mauritiana</i>	25	10
Value Group M – Medium Grade Species				
Snakefish	SNF	<i>Holothuria coluber</i>	30	20
Elephant trunkfish	ETF	<i>Holothuria fuscopunctata</i>	40	20
Golden sandfish	GSF	<i>Holothuria lessoni</i>	25	10
Brown sandfish	BSF	<i>Bohadschia vitiensis</i>	25	10
Tigerfish/Leopardfish	TF	<i>Bohadschia argus</i>	30	15
Amberfish	AMF	<i>Thelenota anax</i>	40	15
Chalk fish	CHF	<i>Bohadschia similis</i>	20	10
Value Group L – Low Grade Species				
Lolly fish	LF	<i>Holothuria atra</i>	30	15
Pinfish	PKF	<i>Holothuria edulis</i>	20	10
Snakefish red	RSNF	<i>Holothuria flavomaculata</i>	20	10
Snakefish white	WSNF	<i>Holothuria leucospilota</i>	20	10
Flowerfish/Ripplefish/Orangefish	FF	<i>Pearsonothuria graeffei</i>	30	15
Deepwater red fish	DRF	<i>Actinopyga echinites</i>	20	10
Honpai fish, pigfish				
Lemonfish/Candyfish	LMF	<i>Thelenota rubralineata</i>	30	15

NO BROWN CURRYFISH, 20 WET AND 10 DRIED
 NO DEEPWATER BLACKFISH 30 FOR WET AND 15 FOR DRIED
 SOME SPECIES MISSING

Schedule 6: Sea Cucumber Export Declaration Form

(This Form is to be filled & submitted at every request for Sea Cucumber Export)

Send completed form to: The Director, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, PO Box G13, Honiara, Solomon Islands, Telephone: (677) 39143, 30546; Fax: (677) 38730

Exporting Company: _____

Date of Shipment: _____

SC License No: _____

Country of Destination: _____

Sea Cucumber Species Code*	No. of bags	Number of pieces per bag	Total weight of bag (kg)	Local Purchase (Price/kg)	Export Value/Currency per kg
TOTAL					
<i>I certify that the above information was/were provided by me and at best of my knowledge.</i>			<i>I certify that the above described product(s) was/were inspected by me and found to be legal and suitable for Export</i>		
Company Rep:		Inspection Officer			
Designation		Designation			
Signature		Signature			
<i>I certify that the above described product(s) was/were validated by me and recommending for processing for a Export Permit</i>			This document is valid only with inspecting & Validation Official's Original Signature made and Stamps made here		
Validation Officer					
Designation					
Signature					
Date					
White teatfish (WTF) Sandfish (SF) Black teatfish (BTF) Greenfish (GF) Curryfish (CF) Peanutfish/Dragonfish (PNF) Prickly redfish (PRF) Stonefish (STF) Blackfish (BF) Surf redfish (SRF) Snakefish (SNF) Elephant trunkfish (ETF) Golden sandfish (GSF) Brown sandfish (BSF) Tigerfish/Leopardfish (TF) Amberfish (AMF) Chalk fish (CHF) Lollyfish (LF) Pinkfish (PKF) Snakefish Red (RSNF) Flowerfish/Ripplefish/Orangefish (FF) Deepwater Redfish (DRF) Lemonfish/Candyfish (LMF)					

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