

13th MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

8 to 13 September 2025, Wellington, New Zealand

SC13 - Doc 07

Secretariat's report on Scientific Committee related activities

Secretariat

1. Introduction

This paper informs SC13 about relevant activities conducted over the past year by the Secretariat. These activities include [external meetings](#), [project inputs](#) and [data releases](#). This paper continues on from the papers on this topic from previous years (most recently [SC12-Doc07](#)).

- *SC13 is requested to note the contents of this paper*
- *The SC13 is invited to provide any views or recommendations for the Secretariat in this regard*

2. Secretariat Staffing

- a. The new Executive Secretary was appointed at COMM13 and took up his position shortly after in April 2025. Amongst other things, he has been taking stock of the SPRFMO scientific and data work programme. This has included supporting the SC chair and joining virtual meetings of the Working Group on Electronic Monitoring Standards and Jack Mackerel MSE Science and Managers Session.
- b. The 12th Annual Meeting of the Commission made a decision to recruit a Science Manager in light of the anticipated workload in the coming years and need to strengthen the resources of the Secretariat to support Members and the Scientific Committee. The 13th Annual Meeting of the Commission adopted a budget for 2025/26 that provided for recruitment in 2026.
- c. The Executive Secretary has begun work on a position description in consultation with the Chairperson of the Scientific Committee as required by SPRFMO Staff Regulation 2.2 (footnote 2). This is being done with reference to the SC recommendation from 2023 contained in paragraph 47 of the SC11-report and SC12 discussions and identification of important Science Manager traits. It is anticipated that the Science Manager role will be advertised in the first quarter of 2026. It will be disseminated through the SC contacts with a request to share with wider networks for maximum exposure.

3. External meetings

- a. **Common Oceans Program:** The [Common Oceans Program](#) is a global partnership funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), promoting sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) with a particular focus on tuna and deep-sea fisheries, the Sargasso Sea, and cross-sectoral cooperation. Led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Program brings together the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), regional fisheries management organizations, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, and academia.



- b. The SPRFMO Executive Secretary has picked up his predecessor's engagement with the programme, starting with introductory calls to the relevant project contacts. SPRFMO is a project partner of the [Deep-sea fisheries](#) project. The Secretariat participates in some of its initiatives and disseminates these to Members (e.g., Letters G98-2024, G99-2024). Consideration is being given to participating in a workshop on cross-sectoral interactions with deep-sea fisheries (24-26 September at FAO HQ) and the 2nd Project Steering Committee meeting being planned for the first quarter of 2026.
- c. SPRFMO is a Project Steering Committee member of the [cross-sectoral project](#) (CSP). The CSP is working with the Southeast Pacific and Pacific Islands as two initial pilot regions i.e., 14 Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) members and 4 Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (CPPS) members. The former Executive Secretary participated in its second Project Steering Committee in January 2025. The current Executive Secretary participated in two interviews to inform development of a capacity building program (a capacity needs assessment and a gender stocktake).
- d. **CCAMLR:** SPRFMO and CCAMLR Secretariat staff met for their annual cooperation meeting in June 2025 under the SPRFMO-CCAMLR Arrangement to facilitate cooperation to advance objectives, particularly with regard to stocks and species of mutual interest. The two Secretariats continue to cooperate on science and data related issues, including data management and data exchange. The SPRFMO Secretariat continues to share details of toothfish releases and recaptures in the SPRFMO Area with the CCAMLR Secretariat as foreseen in the Arrangement. The CCAMLR Secretariat provides a report annually to SPRFMO on recaptures that came from fish tagged in SPRFMO, and SPRFMO recaptures that were tagged in CCAMLR (Annex 1). Potential areas identified for further cooperation include the expansion of SPRFMO's exploratory toothfish fisheries, scientific observers, and reviewing the scope of information exchange to maintain a focus in data sharing.

Data releases

- a. The Secretariat received ad-hoc data requests submitted by some Members to support national assessments, ecological risk analyses, and the preparation of statutory reports. Each request is screened for consistency with SPRFMO confidentiality provisions, validated against the current data standards, and delivered in the requester's preferred format.
- b. The following ad-hoc data requests were fulfilled:
- Australian request for Historical Deep-Water Chondrichthyan Presence Data Provided to Australia for ERA Mapping
 - Australian standard request for annual catch data to update the annual Fishery Status Report produced by Australian Government.

4. SC Requests to Secretariat

Document	Request	Status
SC12-Report Para 8	The SC noted that document SC12-Doc06 (providing a collation of the intersessional working group meeting reports) was not available for the start of the meeting. The Secretariat advised that this was because working group meetings were being held right up until the day before the start of the main SC meeting. The Secretariat agreed to compile this paper and record that it was only made available post meeting.	



SC Workplan – Jack Mackerel assessment	SC and other funds to support experts during the SC assessment.	Ms Lee Qi was engaged to support the jack mackerel stock assessment for SC13.
SC Workplan – Squid workshop	Squid Workshop including potential assessment techniques, abundance indices and simulated assessment; to be held in person.	Two intersessional meetings of the squid working group were held in preparation for SC13. A squid assessment workshop will be held immediately prior to the SC13 meeting.
SC Workplan – Climate Change	Compile, review and assess climate-related data, reanalysis and models needed for SPRFMO research, including climate change scenarios; identifying any gaps and limitations.	The Secretariat engaged the <i>Institut de Recherche pour le Développement</i> in December 2024 for 12 months to host two Masters trainees to “Compile, review and assess climate-related data, reanalysis and models needed for SPRFMO research, including climate change scenarios; identifying any gaps and limitations”. An interim report is to be received by SPRFMO by 31 August 2025 and a final report in December 2025.
SC Workplan – FAO ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries	Coordinate activities over their next five-year plan that could involve member scientists and a number of SPRFMO science projects.	An invitation to a workshop on cross-sectoral interactions with deep-sea fisheries has been conveyed to the Chairpersons of the Commission, SC and Deepwater Working Group (24-26 September at FAO HQ). Consideration is being given to the Executive Secretary participating in this and the 2 nd Project Steering Committee meeting being planned for the first quarter of 2026.
SC Workplan – CPPS joint work plan	Increase cooperation and collaboration between both organisations and update the existing MoU.	The Executive Secretary has engaged with the CPPS Secretary General on the implementation of the CPPS-SPRFMO MOU, including opportunities to improve it or its implementation. This might include in the areas of climate change, fisheries science and IUU fishing. The CPPS Director of Scientific Affairs and Fisheries Resources (Mr. Edwin Pinto) has been attending the SC intersessional meetings to better understand areas of mutual interest and has met with the SC Chair to discuss a workplan. It was agreed that an update to the MoU is unnecessary.