

13th MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

8 to 13 September 2025, Wellington, New Zealand

SC 13 – Doc 08

Status of the Scientific Support Fund and other financial contributions

Secretariat

1. Background

The Scientific Committee (SC) works on the basis of its Multi-Annual Workplan which each year is presented to the Commission for agreement and to confirm funding. The workplan generally identifies the calendar year in which the tasks are expected to be completed (e.g., 2025) or as ongoing work (e.g., 2025+).

The SC Multi-Annual Workplan is resourced by in-kind and financial contributions. This includes the SPRFMO Scientific Support Fund (SSF), which is funded from the annual Commission 'Scientific Support' Budget Category and voluntary contributions. Grants also compliment the SSF.

Each year the Commission establishes its annual budget for the coming financial year, including the amount for the 'Scientific Support' Budget Category. The SSF contains the accumulated unspent appropriations from previous financial years. Unless otherwise decided by the Commission, unspent appropriations may accrue between financial years, up to a limit of \$50,000; beyond this level such funds are to be treated as surplus and transferred to the accumulated surplus account (Financial Regulation 2.4).

The SC is invited to:

- **Note** that the SC fund can cover the multi-annual work plan activities for 2025 and up to June 2026
- **Consider** the costs, resource allocation and relative priorities for the tasks and sub tasks, and provide guidance as appropriate, including on the basis of the Performance Review recommendations
- **Provide feedback** on how the Secretariat might usefully report in future on financing the Multi-Annual Workplan.

2. Scientific Support Fund Status

Last financial year (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025), total expenses from the SSF were \$145,836. The closing balance, which was then available this financial year, was \$139,974. Expenses and income are detailed in Table 1.

Tables 2 and 3 detail the projected costs of the Multi-Annual Plan activities and the SSF income this financial year (1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026). Key points to note in allocating the available resources include:

- There is a projected SSF surplus.
- More funding is available than current costings for chub mackerel and squid workshops due to a combination of SSF and VCs funds.
- The US voluntary contribution (VC) for jack mackerel MSE work has not yet been allocated.
- Jack mackerel connectivity sampling and research is unfunded (\$46,000 this year; \$75,000 per annum).
- Any surplus squid connectivity funding (China VC) will be carried into next year.



Table 1: Status of the Scientific Support Fund last financial year (1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025)

Opening Balance as of 1 July 2024			\$ 127 328
Month	Expenses	Amount	
Sept-24	SC12 invited expert – Climate Change (VC-USA)	\$ 5 939	
Sept-24	SC12 invited expert – Squid workshop	\$ 6 835	
Oct-24	SC12 invited expert – jack mackerel connectivity	\$ 7 551	
Oct-24	SC12 jack mackerel connectivity workshop	\$ 6 489	
Oct-25	SC12 invited expert – jack mackerel assessment	\$ 14 115	
Jan-25	Climate Change compile, review and assess climate-related data	\$ 19 363	
Jan-25	Collect and analyse samples for population genomic studies (Convention area and adjacent National Jurisdiction Areas) (VC-China)	\$ 84 948	
Whole financial year	GITHUB fees	\$ 524	
Whole financial year	Bank fees	\$ 72	
Subtotal – Expenses			\$ 145 836
Month	Income	Amount	
Jul-24	Commission budget (Category 8. Scientific Support fund)	\$ 40 000	
Sept-24	USA Voluntary Contribution SC12 related	\$ 16 260	
Sept-24	Chile voluntary contribution MSE workshop	\$ 24 000	
Nov-24	China voluntary contribution squid research	\$ 30 648	
Jun-25	Vanuatu voluntary contribution	\$ 45 000	
Whole financial year	Bank interest	\$ 2 574	
Subtotal – Income			\$ 158 482
Closing Balance as of 30 June 2025			\$ 139 974



Table 2: Projected costs and funding of the Scientific Committee Multi-Annual Plan activities this financial year (1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026)

Task	Subtask	Timeline	Coordinator	Costs	SSF Funding	Other Funding	Surplus/Shortfall
Jack mackerel assessment	SC and other funds to support experts during SC assessment	2025+	SC Chair Secretariat	\$15 000	\$15 000 (VUT VC)		\$0
	Organise a benchmark data workshop (1) for JM to compile relevant stock indicators such as CPUE, fisheries independent surveys and opportunistic acoustic survey data to be followed by a benchmark workshop (2) to address model configuration	2025-2026		\$24 000 \$30 000	\$22 000 (CHL for Workshop arrangements) \$30 000 (VUT VC for external reviewers and Secretariat)		-\$2 000 \$0
Jack mackerel MSE	Develop and carry out an MSE: Seattle workshop (concluded)	Jul-25	EU, USA	\$34 000		\$34,000 (EU grant + Chile VC)	\$0
Jack mackerel connectivity research	Organise two in-person workshops to:	2025/2026	EU / CHL / PER	\$6 000			-\$6 000
	1. Identify key practical requirements and considerations for sampling approaches for progressing work on the identified priority topics (Genetics, tagging methods, Early stages & Reproduction) including outlining possible iterative/annual changes to sampling design.						
	2. Identify key hypotheses on connectivity and a description of how these hypotheses could be tested using the priority topics. Describe an approach for considering evidence.			\$40 000			-\$40 000



Task	Subtask	Timeline	Coordinator	Costs	SSF Funding	Other Funding	Surplus/Shortfall
	3. Produce workshop reports and outputs to inform the development of a sampling and research programme.						
	Design and undertake a sampling and research programme (including data analysis and reporting) across the 4 combined identified high priority topics <i>Genetics, tagging methods</i> and <i>Reproduction / Early Stages</i> , to evidence jack mackerel connectivity.	2026 - 2032	EU / CHL / PER	\$75 000 Annual costs	(no 25/26 SSF allocation; Matched in-kind funding & seeking of industry funding)		-\$75 000
Chub mackerel	Organize a data compilation workshop to compile an overview on catch, catch distribution, mixing densities in the JM fishery, life history characteristics and independent survey estimates on chub mackerel	FY 2025-2026 (~May 2026)	CHL, PER	\$45 000	\$45 000	\$47 000 (EU grant EUR 24 000)	\$47 000
Squid workshop	Squid Workshop including potential assessment techniques, abundance indices and simulated assessment; to be held in person	2025+	SQWG Chair/ Secretariat	\$25 000	\$25 000 ((\$25k 25/26 SSF allocation)	\$17 000 (Pew)	\$17 000
Squid connectivity	Collect samples for population genomic studies (Convention Area and adjacent National Jurisdiction Areas)	2025-26		\$34 000	\$43 270 (China – purpose TBD)		\$9 270



Task	Subtask	Timeline	Coordinator	Costs	SSF Funding	Other Funding	Surplus/Shortfall
Symposium	Publication of a Special Issue of Scientific Journal, on the 2023 Symposium on State of the Art of Habitat Monitoring	2025	Symposium steering committee	\$9 731	\$9 731 (USA)		\$0
	GITHUB annual fee	2025	Secretariat	\$600	\$600		\$0
Subtotal – Estimated Expense from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026				\$338 331	\$190 601	\$98 000	-\$49 730



Table 3 Projected SSF income and forecast balance based on Table 2 allocations (1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026)

Month	Income	Amount
Jul-25	Commission budget (Category 8. Scientific Support fund)	\$70 600
Sept-25	USA voluntary contribution – jack mackerel MSE	\$34 000
Sept-25	Pew Charitable Trusts voluntary contribution – squid assessment simulation workshop	\$17 000
Subtotal – Income		\$121 600
Forecast Closing Balance as of 30 June 2026		\$70 973

3. Other Financial Contributions

3.1. Chile voluntary contribution

After using \$2,000 for the MSE workshop, **\$22,000** is available from a Chile VC provided in 2024 towards the planned benchmark workshop, included in Table 2.

3.2. China voluntary contributions

China has been making regular VCs for SC squid related research activities. These are accounted for through the SSF as in the above tables. These contributions, alongside the historic unused balance, total \$43,270 and are available for collecting and analysing genetic samplings (Convention area and adjacent National Jurisdiction Areas). As per the Squid Connectivity item in the Multi-Annual Workplan, **\$43,270** has been allocated to 2025-2026 in Table 2.

3.3. USA voluntary contributions

Funds are available from three VCs from the USA to the SSF:

- 2022 \$42,475 – was used to support invited speakers to the SPRFMO Habitat Monitoring symposium in 6-8 November 2023 in Concepcion, Chile. NZ\$9,731 remains available and has been allocated to support publishing the proceedings report.
- 2024 \$16,260 – was used to support SC12 participation of an invited expert on climate change. NZ\$10,321 remains available to support the jack mackerel MSE work.
- 2025 \$34,000 – is being provided to support the ongoing jack mackerel MSE work.

A total **\$44,321** is available for the jack mackerel MSE work. This is included in income listed in Table 3 but has not yet been allocated to a specific subtask in Table 2.

3.4. Vanuatu voluntary contribution

Vanuatu made a VC in 2024 of **\$30,000** towards the planned benchmark workshop, and a further **\$15,000** for the jack mackerel assessment with flexibility to reprioritise this as appropriate, included in Table 2.



3.5. The Pew Charitable Trusts voluntary contribution

The Pew Charitable Trusts is making a **\$17,000** VC to support the planned in-person workshop of the Assessment Simulation Task Team for the Jumbo Flying Squid. This is in addition to the \$25,000 originally budgeted from the SSF. Both are included in Table 2. This is the first VC from a SPRFMO observer.

3.6. European Union (EU) Project Grants

EU projects often support the implementation of the SC Multi-Annual Workplan, while being separate from the Commission budget and Scientific Support Fund. The current EU funded project ‘Support to Science-based decision making’ (# 101189418) has a 24-month duration (from 01/06/2024 to 30/06/2026). Amongst other things, it has two work packages relating to the SC Multi-Annual Workplan, to ensure:

1. the sustainable management of the jack mackerel stock by supporting the continuation and completion of a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the jack mackerel fishery in SPRFMO.
2. the sustainable management of other species in the SPRFMO Convention Area that are subject to targeted fishing operations (e.g., chub mackerel *Scomber japonicus*).

This will be achieved by updating the existing tier-based assessment framework and developing stock assessments for those species, even if data limited, and especially where the fishing is not associated with a science-based monitoring scheme. The status of the project and its funding is reported in Table 4 and funds are included in Table 2. The MSE work package funds have been fully disbursed while funds for the assessment of other species are entirely unspent.

Table 4: Status of Project 101189418 Support to Science based decision making

Tasks	Task lead(s)	Project components	Funding	Expenses	Balance
Jack mackerel MSE	Jack mackerel working group	Establish contract to finalise MSE; Support virtual SC WGs, Capacity building workshop, SC-policy workshop in Feb 2025 (AM)	\$153 000 (EUR 85K)	\$153 000	0
Assessments for other fished species	Jack mackerel working group	Develop assessments for other fished species (e.g., Chub)	\$45 000 (EUR25K)	0	\$45 000