

13TH MEETING OF THE SPRFMO SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Wellington, New Zealand, 8 to 13 September 2025

SC 13 – Doc 13

Scientific Committee Protocol for Data Access under CMM 02-2025

SC Chairperson

1. Introduction

The effective functioning of the Scientific Committee (SC) relies on timely access to relevant data, including non-public domain data held by the Secretariat. These data are essential for advancing the SC's multi-annual workplan, including tasks such as stock assessments, ecosystem evaluations, and analysis of impacts on non-target species. Requests for non-public data must follow the procedures set out in CMM 02-2025, which require appropriate authorisation by the Commission or data providers. This document proposes a standardised protocol for the SC to request, review, and coordinate access to non-public domain data in a transparent and collaborative manner, ensuring compliance with the Measure and supporting high-quality, cooperative scientific work.

The Scientific Committee is invited to review this proposal, provide comments and advice, and aim to adopt the protocol after considering any amendments it finds necessary.

2. Protocol for Scientific Committee Data Sharing

This section establishes a formal protocol for the Scientific Committee (SC) to request access to non-public domain data from the Secretariat under the framework of CMM 02-2025. The objective is to ensure that the SC have access to the data needed to execute its activities and such requests are transparent, and compliant with CMM 02, particularly paragraph 6(c):

...the Secretariat is to: ...

c) compile and disseminate to Members and CNCPs or their designates non-public domain data (being any data not described in 6(a)):

i. in response to a written request from Commission, for the purposes documented by the Commission; and

ii. in the absence of a written request from the Commission - only with the authorisation of the Participant(s) that originally provided that data.

2.1 Scope

This protocol applies to any request for access to non-public domain data by the SC, for the purposes of executing specific tasks within the SC's multi-annual workplan, including but not limited to stock assessments, ecosystem evaluations, and bycatch analyses.



2.2 Data Request Process

Any Member, CNCP, or SC Chairperson shall submit a request using the standard template (Annex 1) to the SC for consideration. The template must include:

- a. A description of the data requested, including variables, temporal and spatial resolution, and any required granularity.
- b. The specific tasks or activities in the SC multi-annual workplan that require the data.
- c. The list of Members and CNCPs involved in the execution of the tasks.
- d. Any additional data sources required for the work (e.g., public domain data, national data, environmental layers).
- e. Any proposed confidentiality measures, where relevant.

2.3 Review by the Scientific Committee

The SC shall review submitted requests during its annual meeting based on:

- a. Scientific relevance and alignment with the SC workplan.
- b. Adequacy of the proposed confidentiality and data handling measures.
- c. Clarity of responsibilities and participation among requesting parties.

The SC shall formally recommend to the Commission in their Annual Report that the Secretariat release the requested data to the listed Members and CNCPs for the stated purpose and agreed duration of the research tasks.

2.4 Secretariat Action

Following Commission authorisation (as per CMM 02-2025, paragraph 6(c)(i)), the Secretariat shall:

- a. Prepare and release the requested dataset, in accordance with its internal standards and deadlines.
- b. Notify the SC of the data release.
- c. Maintain a record of data requests and releases for accountability and audit purposes.

2.5 Conditions of Use and Reporting Obligations

To ensure transparency, collaboration, and accountability in the use of non-public domain data accessed through this protocol, the following conditions apply to all Members and CNCPs receiving the data:

- a. The data shall be used exclusively for the tasks described and approved in the request template (Annex 1). Any other use will require a separate request and authorisation.
- b. Each year, until completion of the tasks, the involved Members and CNCPs shall submit to the SC an annual progress report, detailing activities undertaken, preliminary results (if any), and expected timelines for completion.
- c. Any scientific publication resulting from the approved tasks and based on the shared data shall be submitted in draft form to the Scientific Committee via the Secretariat for review and comment prior to submission to a journal or other outlet.
- d. Use of the additional affiliation "Scientific Committee, South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO), Wellington, New Zealand" by Members and CNCPs involved is encouraged to highlight the collaborative and multilateral nature of the work. However, this affiliation may only be used if the SC has been provided the opportunity to



review the manuscript and has endorsed its use.

- e. Upon official circulation of the draft manuscript by the Secretariat, Members and CNCPs shall have 30 days to provide comments. If no substantial objections are raised within that period, the manuscript will be considered endorsed and authorised to include the SC-SPRFMO affiliation.
- f. Authors should address SC comments to the extent possible in the final manuscript. In cases where significant disagreement remains and endorsement is not granted, Members and CNCPs may proceed with submission, but shall not use the SC-SPRFMO affiliation.

These conditions aim to promote cooperative scientific work and recognition of joint efforts under the SPRFMO framework.

3. Relationship with other data requests

The purpose of this protocol is to support the implementation of CMM02 and the work of the SC by facilitating appropriate access to non-public domain data related to the work of the SC in a transparent and collaborative manner. It is without prejudice to the Commission or Participant(s) that originally provided data authorising the release of other non-public domain data to Members and CNCPs or their designates. Examples include but are not limited to data in the areas of compliance or general fishing activity.



ANNEX 1

Data Request Template

Please complete the following fields to request access to non-public domain data for work under the Scientific Committee's multi-annual workplan.

1. Requesting Entities and Participants

Provide the name of the Member(s), CNCP(s), or SC Chair submitting the request. List all Members and CNCPs who will be directly involved in the execution of the work. Include institutional affiliations and primary contacts if known.

2. Purpose of the Request

Summarise the scientific objective(s) of the proposed work. Indicate which specific tasks or activities in the SC multi-annual workplan the data request supports, and describe the intended outcomes (e.g. stock assessment, impact analysis, model development, SC document).

3. Timeline

Provide an estimated start and end date for the work. If relevant, include intermediate milestones (e.g. working papers, presentation at next SC meeting, expected delivery of outputs).

4. Description of Data Requested

Specify the type of data required (e.g. observer data, fishing effort, biological samples). Detail the key variables, temporal coverage, geographic extent, and required spatial/temporal resolution or granularity (e.g., set-by-set, daily, 0.1° grid).

5. Additional Data Sources

List other data sources that will be used in the work, including:

- Public domain data (e.g. aggregated catch effort, environmental data)
- National or regional datasets (e.g. tagging, acoustics, port sampling)
- Any external or third-party sources

6. Confidentiality and Data Handling

Describe how the data will be stored, accessed, and used. Identify the person(s) responsible for data management. Indicate any data-sharing agreements or confidentiality measures to be implemented.