

**Preparatory Conference**

**Third Session, Santiago, Chile: 30 January – 3 February 2012**

**PrepCon-03-INF-06**

**Functions and staffing of the Secretariat**

**Introduction**

The Preparatory Conference is to make recommendations concerning the Secretariat of the Commission in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, and to make recommendations concerning the budget for the first financial period of the Commission.

This paper is a follow-up to a report to the first session, PrepCon-01-INF-04, that provided background information relevant to the staffing requirements of the Secretariat.

**The Convention**

Article 6 of the Convention provides that there shall be a Secretariat and Article 14 provides that the functions of the Secretariat will be delegated to it by the Commission. The Secretariat is required to be cost effective, and the setting up and the functioning of the Secretariat shall, where appropriate, take into account the capacity of existing regional institutions to perform certain technical secretariat functions and more specifically the availability of services under contractual arrangement.

The Convention provides the following specific functions for the Executive Secretary:

- Article 15. Submission of a draft of the annual budget for the two succeeding financial years to each member of the Commission together with a schedule of contributions and notification of members of the Commission of their contributions due as calculated under the formula adopted by the Commission.
- Article 17. Communication of matters concerning the implementation of decisions among members of the Commission.
- Article 35. Receipt of proposals for amendments to the Convention and communication of them among members of the Commission.
- Annex II. Maintenance of a list of experts in the field of fisheries similar to that maintained by the FAO pursuant to Annex VIII, Article 2 of the 1982 Convention and communication of matters relating to the review Panel.

## **Decisions affecting the Secretariat made during the International Consultations**

Decisions made during the International Consultations that determined the work of the Interim Secretariat will not necessarily carry over into roles for the Secretariat, however those decisions are worth examining because the circumstances that led to them may remain in place. These decisions include the basic role of the Interim Secretariat determined at the time it was established; the data management role implied by the Interim Data Standards, the maintenance of geospatial data implied in the Interim Benthic Assessment; and the data and information collation required by the 2007 Interim Management Measures, the 2009 Revised Interim Measures for Pelagic Fishing, the 2009 Interim Measures for Deepwater Gillnets, and the 2011 Interim Measures for Pelagic Fisheries.

## **Establishment of the Interim Secretariat**

The roles of the Interim Secretariat set out in the Report of the 3rd meeting of the International Consultations Reñaca Meeting are:

- (a) Data Management - The receipt, compilation, storage and dissemination (where appropriate) of data submitted by the Participants;
- (b) Document Management - The receipt, storage and dissemination of reports and documents submitted by the Participants;
- (c) Meetings - Providing assistance to the relevant host in organising meetings of the Consultations and of subsidiary bodies of the Consultations;
- (d) Website - The management of the contents of the SPRFMO website.

Implicit in meeting these roles is that the Interim Secretariat has access to normal administrative services including those for accommodation, financial and personnel management.

## **Data Standards and Interim Measures adopted by the Participants**

The Data Standards and Interim Measures provide a detailed prescription for a wide range and large volume of data describing fishing vessels, fishing operations and geospatial features on the seabed that are to be managed by the Interim Secretariat. A significant part of the work of the Interim Secretariat over the past two years has been devoted to the development of specifications, supervision of developmental work, and testing of a SPRFMO fishery database to store and provide a useful retrieval system for these data.

The Interim Secretariat has been expected produce a range of reports for the Plenary and Working Groups mostly related to the Interim Measures or Data Standards.

## **Roles provided by existing regional institutions or by contracting**

The use of existing regional institutions providing services to fulfil the roles of the Secretariat is constrained by there being no other regional institutions based in New Zealand. When it began scoping SPRFMO's database requirements, the Interim Secretariat considered the possibility of integrating its requirements with those of another existing regional organisation (such as an organisation based in Australia or the wider South Pacific). However, it was concluded that this would not be practical given that the existing systems were generally scaled to match their own needs, and because of significant differences in data standards and specifications between different organisations.

On the other hand, there is considerable scope for having some Secretariat services provided under contract by external service providers. For example, the Interim Secretariat currently purchases services from the New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries including financial management, legal advice and accommodation. Other external contractors provide services such as the maintenance of computer hardware, software and the local area network, web site hosting and enhancement, and development and hosting of the SPRFMO fisheries database. In the future, use of contracting arrangements such as these could allow the Secretariat to keep permanent staff numbers to a minimum. Of course, there is still a need for sufficient capacity within a Secretariat to administer its contracts effectively.

### **Staff to fulfil functions**

After reviewing the functions of the Secretariat and staffing of other Regional Fisheries Management Organisations the earlier paper proposed the following staff.

#### Executive Secretary

- Overall responsibility for work of the Secretariat

#### Administration officer

- Reception, routine correspondence, book keeping, filing, maintenance of office equipment and supplies, web site updates, etc

#### Data Manager plus Data assistant

- Responsible for data management systems and data reporting
- Checking and input of data

Functions such as supervising services that are provided contractually, and supporting meetings of the Commission and Committees would be distributed among staff members.

### **Conclusion**

There have been no other proposals for staffing of the Secretariat, and accordingly this structure is used as a basis for the budget proposed for the first year of the Organisation.