

## **Contribution of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) to the UN Secretary General on Oceans and the Law of the Sea**

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The 2009 Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean established the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO). The Convention entered into force on 24 August 2012 and the first meeting of the Commission, its governing body, was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 28 January to 1 February 2013.

The objective of the SPRFMO Convention is, through the application of the precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources and, in so doing, to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which these resources occur. The SPRFMO Convention applies to the high seas of the South Pacific, covering about a fourth of the Earth's high seas areas. Currently, the main commercial resources fished in the SPRFMO Area are Jack mackerel and Jumbo flying squid in the Southeast Pacific and, to a much lesser degree, deep-sea species often associated with seamounts in the Southwest Pacific.

This document provides some information specific to UNGA resolution 72/73.

We are also including the most recent 2017 SPRFMO Annual Report of the Commission that includes decisions taken by the Commission as well as information on actions taken in response to any recommendations from the General Assembly of the United Nations or the FAO.

### **INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 72/73**

#### **II Capacity-building**

*10. Emphasizes that capacity-building is essential to ensure that States, especially developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as coastal African States, are able to fully implement the Convention, benefit from the sustainable development of the oceans and seas and participate fully in global and regional forums on ocean affairs and the law of the sea;*

The Commission has established a fund to facilitate the effective participation of developing State Contracting Parties in the region, in particular the least developed among them and small island developing States, and, as appropriate, territories and possessions in the region, in the work of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. As of 30 November 2017, Chile and China have made contributions to this fund and there have been no applications for assistance.

In addition, the Commission's annual budget includes a similar category to support the travel and subsistence for developing State contracting parties to meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. Delegates from Cook Islands, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru and Vanuatu have been supported in this way.

## X Marine biodiversity

*252. Reaffirms the need for States, individually or through competent international organizations, to urgently consider ways to integrate and improve, based on the best available scientific information and the precautionary approach and in accordance with the Convention and related agreements and instruments, the management of risks to the marine biodiversity of seamounts, cold water corals, hydrothermal vents and certain other underwater features;*

*259. Reaffirms the need for States to continue and intensify their efforts, directly and through competent international organizations, to develop and facilitate the use of diverse approaches and tools for conserving and managing vulnerable marine ecosystems, including the possible establishment of marine protected areas, consistent with international law, as reflected in the Convention, and based on the best scientific information available;*

*263. Notes with appreciation the work of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and notes in this regard the global dialogue with regional seas organizations and regional fisheries bodies on accelerating progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, held in Seoul, from 26 to 29 September 2016;*

SPRFMO organised two Deepwater workshops during 2017. The first had a [vulnerable marine ecosystems theme and was held in Hobart, Australia from 23-25 May 2017](#). The second discussed [spatial management options for the SPRFMO bottom fisheries and was held in Shanghai, China on 21 September 2017](#).

At its meeting held 23-28 September 2017, the SPRFMO Scientific Committee considered the outcomes of the previous workshops as well recognising that SPRFMO representatives had attended both [the meeting of the ABNJ Deep Seas Project Steering Committee](#) in February 2017 and a FAO workshop on potential impacts of climate change on deep-sea ecosystems and the implications for the management of deep-sea fisheries

The SPRFMO Scientific Committee also continued discussions on deepwater spatial management approaches, in particular a series of New Zealand organised stakeholder workshops held to gather views on revising the current conservation and management measure for Bottom Fisheries, covering the use of decision support software to inform the design of spatial management areas in the western SPRFMO Area to avoid significant adverse impacts on VMEs while providing for fisheries. The results of these discussions were included in [a joint Australia-New Zealand information paper](#) describing a revision to the SPRFMO bottom fishing measure which was discussed during the 6<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting in early 2018 and will be proposed in 2019.

SPRFMO continues to contribute to the work of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and was represented by the Executive Secretary at the 1<sup>st</sup> global dialogue with regional seas organizations and regional fisheries bodies on accelerating progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, Seoul, from 26-29 September 2016. The Data Manager attended the 2nd global dialogue from 10-13 April 2018 again in Seoul, Korea.

## XII Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects

*325. Invites States and non-governmental organizations, as well as intergovernmental organizations that have not already done so, to provide relevant information for inclusion in the capacity-building inventory of needs and opportunities relevant for the Regular Process being compiled and maintained by the secretariat;*

As per the information provided above.

### XIII Regional cooperation

*332. Invites States and international organizations to enhance their cooperation to better protect the marine environment;*

SPRFMO is actively pursuing opportunities to collaborate with other organisations, especially neighbouring or overlapping RFMOs. Currently the SPRFMO has finalised such arrangements with Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP, 28 Oct 2014) and Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR, 15 Apr 2016) and is currently in discussions with Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (CPPS).

## 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Commission Lima, Peru, 30 January to 3 February 2018

### COMM 6 – Report ANNEX 10 Annual Report of the Commission for the year 2017

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Paragraph 1 of Article 29 of the Convention provides that the “*Commission shall publish an annual report, which shall include details of decisions taken by the Commission to achieve the objective of this Convention. The report shall also provide information on actions taken by the Commission in response to any recommendations from the General Assembly of the United Nations or the FAO.*”

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP

In December 2017, the Commission had fifteen members: Australia, Republic of Chile, People's Republic of China, Cook Islands, Republic of Cuba, Republic of Ecuador, European Union, Kingdom of Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Republic of Peru, Russian Federation, Chinese Taipei, United States of America, and the Republic of Vanuatu.

In December 2017 two countries held the status of Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCs): Republic of Liberia and Republic of Panama.

#### 2. DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION IN 2017

The fifth Commission Meeting was held in Adelaide, Australia, from 18 to 22 January 2017.

The Commission amended the following Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs):

**CMM 01-2017: *Trachurus murphyi*** (TAC of 443 000 tonnes)

**CMM 02-2017: Standards for the Collection, Reporting, Verification and Exchange of Data.** The revision relates to the inclusion of Porbeagle sharks to the list of species in Annex 14, as well as addressing squid fishery data provided to the Secretariat in order to ensure assessment and monitoring of stocks.

**CMM 03-2017: Bottom Fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area.** The Commission agreed to extend the revision date of this measure until the close of the Annual Meeting 2018.

**CMM 04-2017: Establishing a List of Vessels Presumed to have Carried Out IUU Fishing Activities in the SPRFMO Convention Area.** The IUU vessel listing measure was amended to:

- a) clearly reflect that the Executive Secretary is obliged to include a vessel on the Commission's Draft IUU list where he/she is in possession of suitably documented information that gives rise to a presumption of IUU fishing; and
- b) implement the Commission's decision that a vessel must be on the Draft IUU list before it can be included on the Commission's Provisional and Final IUU lists.

**CMM 06-2017: Establishment of the Vessel Monitoring System in the SPRFMO Convention Area.** The Commission revised this CMM and added security and confidentiality requirements as well as rules on the manual reporting of VMS

positions. In this context, it is noteworthy that the Commission contracted the development of a SPRFMO VMS in 2017 (service provider: CLS).

**CMM 07-2017: Minimum Standards of Inspection in Port.** The changes were of a technical editorial nature only.

**CMM 09-2017: Minimising Bycatch of Seabirds in the SPRFMO Convention Area.** The Commission deleted outdated text (the last two paragraphs).

**CMM 10-2017: Establishment of a Compliance and Monitoring Scheme in the SPRFMO Convention Area.** The Commission tasked the Secretariat to amend the template in Annex II to incorporate obligations from new or amended CMMs.

**CMM 12-2017: Regulation of Transshipment and Other Transfer Activities.** The amendments introduced to this CMM relate to advance notification times for transshipment activities of Jack mackerel.

In addition, the Commission adopted the following decisions:

[SPRFMO IUU List](#): At its fifth meeting, the Commission reviewed and adopted the provisional IUU list developed by the CTC and did not add new vessels. The vessels from the 2016 IUU List were retained. Other RFMOs and FAO were notified of the SPRFMO IUU List after the meeting.

[SPRFMO Compliance Report](#): The Commission adopted the second SPRFMO Compliance Report.

[Decision 05-2017](#): The Commission agreed on a Procedure for the Recruitment of the Executive Secretary, establishing selection criteria and a timeline for the process.

The report of the Commission and all related documents are available on the SPRFMO website at [www.sprfmo.int](http://www.sprfmo.int).

### 3. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION IN RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE UNGA OR THE FAO

The SPRFMO Convention and the decisions and CMMs adopted by the Commission include numerous references to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and FAO agreements, resolutions and recommendations which have been reported in previous years. In 2017, the Commission did not adopt additional references to recommendations of the UNGA and FAO.