

DECISION 05-2024

Procedure for the Recruitment of the Executive Secretary

(supersedes Decision 05-2017)

RECALLING Article 14(2) of the Convention, which provides that the chief administrative officer of the Secretariat shall be the Executive Secretary, who shall be appointed with the approval of the Contracting Parties on such terms as they may determine;

RECALLING Rule 6.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, which provides that the Executive Secretary shall be appointed for a term of four years, and shall be eligible for reappointment but shall not serve for more than eight years.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT Article 8(p) of the Convention, which provides the Commission with the authority to take any decisions that may be necessary for achieving the objectives of the Convention;

NOTING the intersessional decision-making procedure established in Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure;

DESIRING to establish a standing process for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary;

GIVING EFFECT to Article 8 of the Convention,

The Commission has decided to adopt the following Decision, which contains the recruitment process for the position of Executive Secretary of the Organisation:

SECTION 1: REAPPOINTMENT OF THE INCUMBENT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1. At the annual meeting of the Commission in the year preceding the year in which the Executive Secretary's term of appointment expires, the Chairperson shall verify with the Executive Secretary his/her interest in being reappointed.
2. In the event of a positive reply, the procedure in paragraph 3 and 4 shall be followed. The Contracting Parties shall be informed of the outcome and the item shall be included in the agenda of the next meeting of the Commission. In the event of a negative reply, the procedure under Section 2 shall be followed.
3. At the meeting referred to in paragraph 1, the Chairperson shall proceed to verify whether there is consensus among the Contracting Parties to re-appoint the incumbent Executive Secretary in accordance with Article 14 (2) of the Convention.
4. In the absence of consensus to re-appoint the incumbent Executive Secretary, the process for the selection of the Executive Secretary shall be launched according to the procedure under Section 2.
5. The Executive Secretary shall assist the Chairperson with the recruitment process. If the incumbent Executive Secretary intends to apply or is also an applicant, he/she shall abstain from any involvement in the process and nominate a staff member of the Secretariat to assist the Chairperson, providing that the appointed staff member does not intend to apply for the position.



SECTION 2: SELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Position documentation and advertisement

6. No more than 60 days after the close of the annual meeting referred to in paragraph 1, the Chairperson shall prepare a draft advertisement for the position of Executive Secretary. The draft advertisement shall include relevant information regarding the vacancy and the application process, including a copy of this recruitment procedure and shall be guided by the following selection criteria:
 - a. Demonstrated management knowledge and skills through relevant experience in national, regional or international organisations;
 - b. Knowledge or experience of fisheries management;
 - c. Knowledge or experience of the functions and operations of intergovernmental organisations at the regional or international level;
 - d. Knowledge or experience of such areas as:
 - i. preparation of reports, financial budgets and management of expenditures;
 - ii. provision of secretariat support for international meetings;
 - iii. oversight and management of information technology;
 - iv. human resource management.
 - e. Demonstrated ability to communicate and work constructively and effectively in a multicultural environment with delegates from a wide range of countries, including managers, scientists and technical experts;
 - f. Fluent in English (the knowledge of other languages of SPRFMO Members would be an asset);
 - g. University degree or the equivalent, with a preference given to an advanced degree (Master or PhD) or equivalent.
7. The Chairperson shall circulate the advertisement to Contracting Parties for review and instruct the Secretariat to post the position description as adopted on the SPRFMO website, setting the deadline for receiving applications at 120 days following the initial posting. The agreed vacancy advertisement shall include relevant information regarding the vacancy and the application process, including a copy of this recruitment procedure.
8. Contracting Parties shall endeavour to post the position description and relevant information on their own websites. The Secretariat shall also arrange for the position description and other relevant information to be posted in national and international publications and websites, including the FAO and RFMO websites.
9. Completed applications shall be submitted to the Chairperson and copied to the Secretariat in electronic format by no later than 5:00pm New Zealand Standard Time, on the date indicated on the advertisement set in accordance with paragraph 7. Applications may be submitted directly to the Chairperson or via a Contracting Party to the Chairperson. Late or incomplete applications shall not be considered.

Acknowledgement of receipt

10. The Chairperson shall notify each applicant, by electronic means, within 5 working days upon receipt of his/her complete application.



Circulation of applications

11. All applications received by the Chairperson by the deadline shall be circulated confidentially to Contracting Parties no later than 15 September, and shall be accessible on the secure part of the SPRFMO website.

Ranking of applicants

12. At the latest by 15 October of the year preceding the next annual meeting of the Commission, each Contracting Party shall notify the Chairperson of no more than five preferred candidates in order of preference. On receipt of all preferences, the Chairperson shall aggregate individual applicants' rankings, awarding five points for a first preference, four points for a second preference, three points for a third preference, two points for a fourth preference and one point for a fifth preference. The individual rankings by Contracting Parties shall be kept confidential by the Chairperson.

Shortlist

13. The candidates with the four highest aggregate scores shall be shortlisted for interview. Should the application of any candidate be withdrawn, the next ranking candidate shall be substituted. In case of a tie for the fourth place, the applicants with equal scores in that place will be included in the short list of candidates. Candidates not included in the short list shall be notified by the Chairperson that they have not been selected.

Interview process

14. The shortlisted candidates shall be notified to Contracting Parties before 15 November. The shortlisted candidates shall be interviewed by Contracting Parties during a virtual meeting of their Heads of Delegation intersessionally prior to the annual meeting. The top two candidates shall be interviewed for a final interview by Contracting Parties during a meeting of their Heads of Delegation at the following annual meeting of the Commission.
15. In order to ensure transparency and fairness of the process, all candidates shall be asked the same questions. Those questions shall be prepared by the Chairperson in consultation with Contracting Parties ahead of the meeting of the Heads of Delegation. Follow-up questions shall be allowed as long as they are related to the same original question and do not discriminate between the candidates.

Appointment Process for the Executive Secretary

16. Following the interview, the Contracting Parties shall endeavour to approve the preferred candidate as Executive Secretary by consensus. the Contracting Parties shall adopt the following voting procedure as a means of working towards a consensus appointment:
 - a. Polling shall be done by secret ballot by the Contracting Parties, represented by Heads of Delegation or their nominated representative.
 - b. In each round, each Head of Delegation shall select one candidate. The candidate with the lowest number of votes each round shall drop out of the ballot process.
 - c. A tie between candidates shall result in a re-ballot between those candidates until one candidate drops out of the process.
 - d. The rounds shall continue until a single candidate remains.
 - e. The candidate who polls the highest in the final round shall be confirmed by the Commission, consistent with the SPRFMO Convention.
 - f. If the chosen candidate declines the position, the next highest-voted candidate shall be appointed by the Commission, consistent with the SPRFMO Convention.
 - g. In the event that a candidate is not confirmed in accordance with this paragraph, the process established in Section 2 of these procedures shall be reinitiated.



17. The chosen candidate shall be notified at the conclusion of the Commission meeting. Contract negotiations with the chosen candidate shall be conducted by the Chairperson of the Commission, in compliance with the Staff Regulations and other rules and procedures of the Commission.
18. The procedure under this Section shall be applied to Non-Contracting Party Members except the voting procedure under paragraph 16.

Start date

19. If possible, the contract of the chosen candidate shall commence two weeks before the departure of the incumbent Executive Secretary in order to allow for the appropriate transition. The newly appointed Executive Secretary's term of office shall officially start on the day after the expiration of the previous Executive Secretary's term or when he/she effectively fills the vacant position, whichever occurs sooner. This date shall be notified to all Members by the Chairperson.

Transitory provision

20. Notwithstanding the terms expressed in paragraphs 6 to 14, the dates indicated in Annex I of this Decision shall apply in relation to the recruitment process beginning in 2024.



ANNEX I

Timeline for the Process for Recruitment of the Executive Secretary (2024)

By 1 June	Advertisement posted on SPRFMO website and in national and international publications
By 1 September	Deadline for applications to be received by the Chairperson
By 15 September	All applications circulated to Contracting Parties
By 15 October	Deadline for receiving rankings by Contracting Parties
By 15 November	Notifications to candidates as to whether they have been shortlisted. Notification of shortlist to Contracting Parties.
Before COMM Meeting	Virtual Interviews of shortlisted candidates by Heads of Delegations of Contracting Parties between 15 November and the Commission meeting
COMM Meeting	Interviews of top two candidates by Heads of Delegations of Contracting Parties at the annual meeting of the Commission in the year in which the incumbent Executive Secretary's term of appointment is due to expire.