

DECISION 13-2023

Decision on Climate change

RECOGNISING international initiatives to address climate change and its effects, including through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement, and the Glasgow Climate Pact.

NOTING the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with specific reference to the Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (2019) and the Sixth Assessment Report (2022).

NOTING that several regional fisheries management organisations, including the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, have recently taken additional steps to prepare for the emerging impacts of climate change on the fisheries under their jurisdiction.

EMPHASISING that climate change is leading to shifts in the distribution and abundance of fisheries, altering ecosystems, affecting livelihoods, destabilising food systems and challenging economic security worldwide.

FURTHER EMPHASISING that climate change is a global, urgent issue affecting the South Pacific and requiring imminent action by resource managers to ensure sustainable use of marine resources.

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Commission of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation could benefit from explicit consideration of climate change, potential impacts from climate change on the fisheries under its jurisdiction, and actions that could be taken to reduce or mitigate these impacts.

RECOGNISING the urgency of developing a comprehensive approach to understanding and addressing the impacts of climate change on fishery resources in the Convention Area.

The Commission of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation decides as follows:

1. To task the Scientific Committee (SC) in 2023 and annually thereafter to include climate change as an agenda item. Within this agenda item, the SC will highlight analyses and data collection programs that best illustrate the potential impacts of climate change. As a result of these discussions, the SC is requested to make recommendations to the Commission on how existing conservation and management measures (CMMs) could be designed or proposed new CMMs established for the adaptation and resilience to climate change impacts in the Convention Area.
2. To task the Compliance and Technical Committee (CTC) in 2024 and annually thereafter to include climate change as an agenda item. Within this agenda item, the CTC will evaluate any issue pursuant to its responsibilities that is related to climate change, take into consideration recommendations, and provide advice to the Commission regarding amendments to existing CMMs or proposed new CMMs that may be necessary as a result of climate change impacts in the Convention Area.
3. To include climate change on its agenda in 2024 and annually thereafter, including the consideration of SC and CTC recommendations and any other considerations regarding climate change impacts.