12TH MEETING OF THE SPRFMO COMMISSION

Manta, Ecuador, 29 January to 2 February 2024

COMM 12 – Prop 26

PROPOSAL TO:

☐ Amend ☒ Create	DECISION XX-2024 on WORKING GROUP ON SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

Submitted by: ECUADOR

Summary of the proposal:

The proposal outlines the establishment of a Working Group within the SPRFMO framework to enhance and optimize monitoring systems for fishing vessels in the Convention Area. The primary objectives include analysing on-board observers, Satellite-Based Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), and electronic monitoring technologies. The Working Group aims to assess and improve current procedures for on-board observers, evaluate the effectiveness of existing VMS systems, and explore electronic monitoring technologies. Collaboration with national and international experts, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and relevant stakeholders is encouraged. The Working Group will deliver periodic progress reports, final recommendations for system improvements, and proposals for regulatory amendments. The proposed timeline spans a specified duration, with regular meetings and progress reports. The Working Group's composition includes experts in fisheries observation, satellite monitoring technologies, electronics, and representatives from SPRFMO Contracting Parties. A budget will be allocated for associated costs, subject to SPRFMO Secretariat approval. The effectiveness of the Working Group will be periodically evaluated to ensure the achievement of its objectives.

Objective of the proposal:

The proposal advocates for the establishment of a Working Group within the SPRFMO framework to bolster monitoring systems for fishing vessels in the designated region. The overarching objective is to comprehensively assess and enhance monitoring mechanisms, focusing on on-board observers, Satellite-Based Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), and electronic monitoring technologies. The importance of this initiative lies in fostering the exchange of experiences, facilitating the analysis of management and conservation measures, and promoting collaborative efforts among SPRFMO Contracting Parties.

Objectives:
1. Evaluate On-board Observers: Review and refine procedures for on-board observers, ensuring their effectiveness and contribution to accurate reporting.
2. Assess VMS Effectiveness: Evaluate the performance of existing Satellite-Based Vessel Monitoring Systems, proposing measures to ensure compliance and transparency.
3. Explore Electronic Monitoring: Investigate and implement guidelines for the integration of electronic monitoring technologies, seeking synergies with VMS and observer programs.
4. Collaboration and Exchange: Encourage collaboration with national and international experts, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and relevant stakeholders to foster knowledge exchange and best practices.

Importance:
1. Enhanced Conservation Measures: Improved monitoring systems contribute to the effective implementation of conservation and management measures, ensuring sustainable fishing practices.
2. Transparency and Compliance: Robust monitoring promotes transparency in fishing activities, aiding in compliance with established regulations and reducing the risk of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
3. International Collaboration: Facilitates the exchange of experiences and expertise among SPRFMO Contracting Parties, fostering a collaborative approach to address common challenges in the region.
4. Data-Driven Decision-Making: Comprehensive monitoring provides accurate data for evidence-based decision-making, supporting the development of informed policies and regulations.

This proposal recognizes the critical role of the Working Group in advancing the shared goals of SPRFMO member nations and underscores the mutual benefits derived from collaborative efforts in monitoring and managing fishing activities in the Convention Area.	
Has the proposal financial impacts or influence on the Secretariat work?	Yes
Ref: COMM12-PROP26	Received on: 10 December 2023

SPRFMO
South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

DECISION XX-2024
WORKING GROUP ON SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

1. Background

The Working Group on Vessel Monitoring is established within the framework of the SPRFMO Convention with the aim of strengthening and improving monitoring systems for fishing activities in the region.

2. Objective

The primary objective of the Working Group is to develop and recommend effective strategies for monitoring fishing vessels, including the analysis of on-board observers, Satellite-Based Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), and electronic monitoring technologies.

3. Scope

The Working Group's scope will cover the geographical area of the SPRFMO Convention, ensuring comprehensive coverage of fishing activities in the region.

4. Activities

Among others, the group can work on the following activities:

4.1 Analysis of On-board Observers:

- Review and evaluation of current on-board observer procedures.
- Development of guidelines and best practices for the selection, training, and deployment of observers.
- Proposal of mechanisms to enhance the quality and accuracy of observer reports.

4.2 Satellite-Based Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS):

- Evaluation of the effectiveness of existing VMS systems.
- Proposal of measures to ensure compliance and transparency through VMS.
- Exploration of emerging technologies to enhance tracking capabilities.

4.3 Electronic Monitoring of Fishing Vessels:

- Review of available electronic monitoring technologies.
- Development of guidelines for the implementation and maintenance of electronic monitoring systems.
- Evaluation of the feasibility of integrating electronic monitoring technologies with VMS and on-board observers.

5. Collaboration and Consultation:

The Working Group will encourage collaboration with national and international experts, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as consultation with relevant stakeholders.

6. Deliverables:

- Periodic progress reports.
- Final recommendations for improving fishing vessel monitoring systems.
- Proposals for amendments to existing regulations, if necessary.

7. General arrangements:

- The Working Group will meet annually.

- In addition to the annual meeting, the WG may hold extraordinary meetings at request of any Member of the Working Group.
- Considering the principle of cost effectiveness, meetings will be held virtually. However, if desired and requested by any Member, in-person meetings should be analysed and discussed within the working group.

8. Evaluation:

The effectiveness of the Working Group will be periodically assessed, and adjustments will be made as necessary to ensure the achievement of its objectives.