Information for Participants

15th SPRFMO Annual Meeting

Brussels (Belgium), 23 February – 5 March 2027

Welcome to the 15th Annual Meeting of the Commission of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) and its subsidiary bodies, taking place in Brussels, Belgium, from 23 February to 5 March 2027. This practical information guide is designed to help you organise your stay, get around the city, and enjoy the meeting. From transport options to nearby accommodation and local tips, everything you need for a comfortable and easy visit is included. We look forward to welcoming you to Brussels for an engaging, productive, and inspiring experience.

1. The Venue



The SPRFMO 2027 annual meeting will take place at:
THON Hotel EU
Thon Hotel EU | Modern hotel in Brussels | Thon Hotels
Rue de la Loi 75, 1040 Bruxelles
+32 2 204 39 11

Virtual participation will also be available for those unable to attend in person.

The hotel is fully accessible for guests with disabilities.

Catering services provided at the THON Hotel EU

- 23 February – 5 March: Welcome coffee, coffee breaks and lunch.
- 1 March – Evening Cocktail Reception: Drinks and standing finger food buffet.

Lunch will always include vegetarian and gluten-free options, and all meals will be labelled with allergen information.

2. Accommodation

THON Hotel EU (same as the venue hotel)
Rooms can be reserved via the special reservation link: THON HOTEL EU Booking link

Rates & Payment:
The rates for the THON Hotel EU vary per night ranging from 150 EUR - 270 EUR depending on the selected night. Given the flexible cancellation policy (up to 7 days before arrival), we encourage guests to book as soon as possible to ensure availability.

Note: All hotel prices include breakfast but exclude the city tax of €5.60 per person per night. We encourage you to book as soon as possible, as rooms may sell out quickly. All hotels accept major debit and credit cards. The discounted rate at each hotel is a limited-time offer; please check the offer deadline. Each hotel has its own cancellation policy; please review the terms carefully before booking. Depending on the hotel, discounts may be accessed via a direct link or by entering a promo code. Be sure to review each hotel's terms and conditions.

Other hotels in the area (~ 5 – 10 min walk)

Martin's Brussels EU
Address: Boulevard Charlemagne 80, Brussels, 1000
Walk: ~10 min (~700 m)
Price per night: 169 EUR
Promotion Code: SPRFMO27
4-star Hotel in the citycenter | Martin's Brussels EU | brussels city center hotel

Pestana Brussels Schuman
Address: Pl. Jean Rey, Bruxelles, 1040
Walk: ~8 min (~ 600 m)
Price per night: 189 EUR
Promotion Code: SPRFMO27
Hotel Pestana Brussels Schuman | Belgium | Best Price

Courtyard by Marriott Brussels EU
Address: Rue Joseph II 32, Brussels, 1000
Walk: ~6 min (~ 400 m)
Price per night: 168 EUR
Book your group rate for Book your GOPA Group - SPRFMO Feb27

Radisson RED Brussels
Address: Rue d'Idalie 35, Brussels, 1050
Walk: ~10 min (~850 m)
Promotion Code: SPRFMO27
Hotels in Brussels with meeting rooms | Radisson RED Brussels

3. Transportation Information

Venue: Thon Hotel EU, Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 75, 1040 Brussels, Belgium.

In Brussels, street names are often displayed in both French and Dutch. Don't be confused if you see two different names for the same street (as for example above).

The hotel is conveniently located near Schuman Metro and railway station and Maelbeek/Maalbeek metro station. Place Luxembourg (Brussels-Luxembourg railway station is also a convenient option.

A) FROM BRUSSELS AIRPORT (ZAVENTEM)

By Train (Recommended)

- At Brussels Airport, follow the signs to the train station on level -1.
- Take a train to **Brussels-Schuman** or **Brussels-Luxembourg**
- Check the SNCB/NMBS timetable online or at the airport railway station for direct connections and the next available departure.
- From **Brussels-Schuman**, walk approximately 5–7 minutes to Thon Hotel EU.
- From **Brussels-Luxembourg**, walk approximately 10-12 minutes to the venue.
- Train services and journey times vary depending on the connection. Tickets can be purchased online or at the airport station.

By Bus (STIB/MIVB Airport Line 12)

- At Brussels Airport, follow the signs to the bus terminal on level 0.
- Take **STIB/MIVB Bus 12** in the direction of Brussels city centre.
- Get off at **Luxembourg (Place Luxembourg)**, in the European Quarter.
- From Place Luxembourg, walk approximately 10 minutes to Thon Hotel EU
- Check the STIB/MIVB website timetable online for the latest departure times and service information or at the bus station. Buses circulate on average every 10 min depending on the time of the day.

By Taxi

Taxis are available outside the airport arrivals area. Uber and Bolt can also be booked via their respective mobile applications.
The journey to Thon Hotel EU typically takes around 30 minutes, depending on traffic.

Taxi companies

Taxi Verts
- www.taxisverts.be
- +32 2 349 49 49

Taxi Bruxelles express
- Taxi Bruxelles Express | Réservez Votre Taxi Bruxellois 7/7 !
- +32 2 844 35 38

Taxi Official
- Hello Taxi Brussels | Book Your Taxi in Just a Few Clicks
- +32 470 93 22 79

UBER/BOLT – via phone application

B) FROM CHARLEROI BRUSSELS SOUTH AIRPORT

By Shuttle Bus + Metro

- At Charleroi Airport, follow the signs to the Flibco shuttle bus stop outside the arrivals terminal.
- Purchase tickets online via the Flibco website or through the mobile app. Check the available payment methods when booking.
- Take the shuttle to Brussels-South railway station (Brussels-Midi/Zuid). The journey typically takes approximately 55–60 minutes, depending on traffic.
- From Brussels-Midi, follow the signs to the metro.
- Take Metro Line 2 or 6 towards Simonis/Elisabeth and change at Arts-Loi/Kunst-Wet for Metro Line 1 or 5 towards Stockel/Herrmann-Debroux.
- Get off at Maelbeek metro station and walk approximately 2–3 minutes to Thon Hotel EU.

Alternatively, take a taxi or book an Uber/Bolt from Brussels-Midi to the venue.

C) ARRIVING BY TRAIN AT BRUSSELS RAILWAY STATIONS

From Brussels-Luxembourg

- Exit Brussels-Luxembourg railway station towards Place Luxembourg.
- Walk to Thon Hotel EU at Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 75.
- Allow approximately 10 minutes on foot.

From Brussels-Schuman

- Exit Brussels-Schuman railway station.
- Walk towards Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat and continue to Thon Hotel EU.

- The hotel is approximately 400 metres from Schuman railway station; allow around 5–7 minutes on foot.

From Brussels-Central (Gare Centrale/Centraal Station)
By Metro (Recommended)

- Follow the signs to the metro station inside Brussels-Central.
- Take Metro Line 1 or 5 towards Stockel or Herrmann-Debroux.
- Get off at Maelbeek metro station, approximately three stops away.
- Exit the station and walk approximately 2–3 minutes to Thon Hotel EU.

By Taxi or Uber/Bolt

Taxis are available outside the station. The journey to the hotel typically takes around 10–15 minutes, depending on traffic.

General Travel Tips

- **Recommended arrival station:** Brussels-Schuman, due to its proximity to Thon Hotel EU.
- **Alternative arrival station:** Brussels-Luxembourg (Place Luxembourg), particularly convenient for participants travelling to the European Quarter.
- **From Brussels-Central:** The metro to Maelbeek/Maalbeek is a convenient option.
- Public transport tickets can be purchased online, through official transport apps or at station ticket machines.
- Contactless payment may be available on eligible public transport services.
- Carry a valid payment card (Visa, Mastercard or Bancontact); cash in euros may also be accepted, depending on the provider.

4. Visa information – For Travellers Who Require a Visa

Travelers who are not visa-exempt must obtain a visa before entering Belgium. As a member of the Schengen Area, Belgium requires visitors to apply for the appropriate visa based on the purpose and length of their stay. The application process is completed through the official Belgian visa system and involves submitting an online application, supporting documents, and attending an appointment at a Belgian embassy, consulate, or authorised visa application center.

Important

- Before travelling, please check whether you need a visa to enter Belgium or whether you can travel visa-free, depending on your nationality and the purpose and duration of your stay. For official information, please consult the Short stay | IBZ

Determine the Type of Visa

- Short-stay Schengen visa (Visa C): For stays up to 90 days (business visits)
- Long-stay visa (Visa D): For stays over 90 days

Apply Online (Visa On Web)

- Create an account on the official portal: https://visaonweb.diplomatie.be
- Complete the application form. Print the application and confirmation with your reference number.

Book an Appointment

Book an appointment at the Belgian embassy/consulate or Visa Application Centre (VAC) in your country. Appointments are usually handled by VFS Global or TLScontact (official service providers authorised by the Belgian government to manage visa applications). Most applicants must attend in person to provide biometric data.

Prepare Required Documents

- Typical documents include (requirements vary by visa type and nationality):
- Valid passport
- Passport photos
- Travel itinerary
- Travel insurance (Schengen-wide)
- Proof of accommodation
- Proof of funds
- Visa fee payment proof

When to Apply

- Apply up to 6 months before travel (8 months for seafarers).
- Apply at least 15 days before departure; applying 1–3 months early is recommended.

Submit Application

- Attend your appointment with all original documents and copies.
- Provide biometric information if required.

Track Your Application

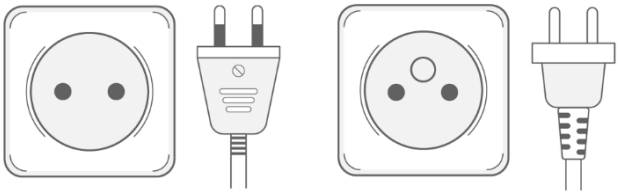
- Track your application through the embassy, VAC, or the FPS Interior portal using your reference number.

5. Electricity

In **Belgium**, the standard **electricity voltage is 230 V** with a **frequency of 50 Hz**, which is common across most of Europe.

- **Type C plugs** — also called "Europlugs" — have **two round pins** and are widely used for smaller appliances and chargers.
- **Type E plugs** — have **two round pins plus a hole for a grounding pin** on the socket. Belgian outlets commonly use this type.

Belgian sockets accept both **Type C and Type E** plugs, and in many places **Type F** plugs will also fit.



Type C Type E

Travel Tip

If your home country uses different plugs (e.g., UK Type G, US Type A/B, or Australian and New Zealand Type I), you will need a **travel adapter** to use your devices with Belgian power outlets.

6. Conference Materials

Participants are encouraged to use personal laptops/tablets during the Conference as the Conference will be generally paperless.

7. Belgium

Belgium is a compact yet remarkably diverse country at the heart of Europe, known for its international outlook and rich cultural heritage. With three official languages (Dutch, French, and German) it reflects a unique blend of traditions and influences. As host to key European institutions and NATO, Belgium plays a central role in international cooperation. Beyond Brussels, several historic and vibrant cities are easily accessible by train within one hour, making them ideal for a short visit during your stay. Bruges offers picturesque canals and medieval charm, Ghent combines history with a lively cultural scene, Antwerp is renowned for fashion and diamonds, and Leuven is home to one of Europe's oldest universities and welcoming terraces. Belgium's efficient rail network and short travel distances make exploring easy and convenient.

Belgian Food

Belgium is known for its great food, mixing simple traditional dishes with a strong focus on quality and craftsmanship. Typical Belgian dishes include moules-frites (mussels served with crispy fries), carbonnade flamande (a slow-cooked beef stew prepared with Belgian beer), and waterzooi, a creamy stew of fish or chicken. Belgian fries, traditionally double-fried for extra crispness, are a national pride and are best enjoyed from a local "friterie" with a wide choice of sauces. Sweet specialties are equally famous: Belgian waffles (in both the light Brussels style and the denser Liège variety), artisanal chocolate pralines, and speculoos biscuits.

Brussels

As the capital of Belgium and a hub of European governance, Brussels offers a dynamic mix of historic landmarks, vibrant neighbourhoods, and green spaces, all easily accessible from the conference venue at Thon Hotel EU.

The UNESCO-listed Grand-Place, widely regarded as one of Europe's most beautiful squares, is located approximately 2.5 km away (around 30–35 minutes on foot or 15 minutes by public transport). Nearby, you can also visit the iconic Manneken Pis and stroll through the elegant Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert.

The European Quarter, home to the European Parliament, is within walking distance of the hotel, approximately 1km away (around 10minutes on foot). It offers insight into Brussels' role at the heart of European decision-making.

For green spaces and museums, Parc du Cinquantenaire is approximately 2 km from the hotel and is ideal for a short walk. The futuristic Atomium, one of the city's most distinctive landmarks, is located approximately 8 km from the hotel and can be reached in around 30–40 minutes by public transport.

In your free time, you may also wish to explore nearby neighbourhoods such as Saint-Géry and Sablon for cafés, restaurants, and artisan chocolate shops, all within easy reach of the venue.

With efficient public transport and many attractions accessible on foot, Brussels is convenient to navigate and rewarding to discover during your stay.

For the most updated agenda, as well as additional information on Brussels, visit: Visitors | Visit Brussels.

Weather in February/March
In late February and early March, Brussels typically experiences cool, early spring weather, with average daytime temperatures ranging between 7°C and 12°C. Evenings and mornings can still be chilly, with temperatures occasionally dropping close to freezing. The weather can be changeable, with cloudy skies, occasional rain showers, and the possibility of frost. An umbrella is always useful in Belgium.

Useful Tips

- **Official languages**: French, Dutch, German, but most locals also speak English.
- **Emergency number**: 112 (Police, Medical Emergency and Fire Brigade).
- **Currency**: local currency in Belgium is the Euro (€ / EUR).
- **Payments**: Credit/debit cards are widely accepted (Visa, Mastercard, Maestro, Bancontact), but it's handy to have some cash for small shops, markets, or public transport tickets.

8. Contacts and registration

The meeting registration link is available here: 2027 SPRFMO Annual Meeting Registration

For registration enquiries, please contact: secretariat@sprfmo.int

Livestreaming will be available for those unable to attend in person. A joining link will be shared closer to the event. Online participants will be in listen-only mode; speaking will not be available.

Thank you for your interest in participating in the 2027 annual meeting.
We look forward to welcoming you to Brussels!