

11TH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

11 to 16 September 2023, Panama City, Panama

SC11 – Doc08

Status of the SC Fund (Scientific Support)

Secretariat

1. Background

Financial Regulation 2.4. states that *“Unless otherwise decided by the Commission, for the budget category “Scientific Support” unspent appropriations may accrue between financial years, up to a limit of \$50 000. Beyond this level such funds shall be treated as surplus and transferred to the accumulated surplus account.”*

The SC is invited to:

- Note that the SC fund can cover the planned multi-annual work plan activities for 2023 and up to June 2024
- Acknowledge that if additional activities are identified that will require more than NZ\$ 14,428 then funds will need to be sought either from the Commission (via Category 8 “Scientific Support” in the Annual Budget) or supported by voluntary contributions
- Note that several items require beneficiaries to invoice the Secretariat appropriately and/or identify an appropriate coordinator to ensure that allocated funds can be used for their intended purposes.

2. Status of Scientific Support (SC) Fund

2.1 Current Status of SC Fund

Table 1 below shows the status of the Scientific Support Fund, starting from 01 January 2023 up to 31 December 2023.

2.2 Forecast Status of the SC Fund up to 30 June 2024

Table 2 shows the forecasted status of the SC fund after including the identified activities from within the Scientific Committee Multi-Annual Plan. Note that this forecast ends 30 June to align with the SPRFMO financial year which runs from July through to June).



Table 1: Status of the Scientific Support fund (non-project) as at SC11

Opening Balance as of 01 January 2023			173 987
Month	Expenses	Amount	
March	Squid research (support to Peru)	10 012	
June	GITHUB fees	501	
September	Jack mackerel: SC and other funds to support experts during SC assessment. Committed	10 000	
September	Squid: Squid Workshop including potential assessment techniques and appropriate measures of fishing effort (SC11). Cancelled (refer SC Multi-Annual Workplan)	0	
November	<i>Habitat Monitoring Symposium (Awaiting disbursement details)</i>	63 000	
November	<i>Habitat monitoring Symposium (USA grant) (Awaiting disbursement details)</i>	42 475	
December	<i>Squid: Collect and analyse genetic samplings (China grant) (Awaiting disbursement details, refer SC Multi-Annual Workplan ~ NZ\$47K, less support paid to Peru)</i>	36 988	
Subtotal – Expenses to 31 December 2023			(162 976)
Month	Income	Amount	
January	Voluntary contribution (China) for Squid research	28 130	
July	Voluntary contribution (China) for Squid research	25 202	
July	Category 8. Scientific support (Commission budget)	10 000	
Whole year	Estimated other income (bank interest, GST refunds etc)	3 967	
Subtotal – Income to 31 December 2023			67 299
Predicted Balance as of 31 December 2023			78 310



Table 2: Forecast Status of the Scientific Support fund for 2024

Predicted Balance as of 1 January 2024				78 310
Task	Subtask	Timeline	Coordinator	Funding required
Jack mackerel assessment	SC and other funds to support experts during SC assessment	2023+	SC Chair/ Secretariat	10 000
Squid connectivity	Collect and analyse genetic samplings. (Support to Squid fishing members)	2023+		53 332
	GITHUB Annual Fee	2024	Secretariat	550
Forecast Balance as of 30 June 2024				14 428

3. Other contributions to SC activities

3.1. Voluntary contributions from the European Union (EU)

Ongoing: Support for science and data management in SPRFMO, € 125,000 (NZ\$ 208,750 approximately).

This grant, being coordinated by the Secretariat for the period July 2020 to December 2023 (with an extension) consists of three work packages:

Work Package 1: The first part was intended to provide support for science in terms of logistics, material, expert support and travel, hotels etc for the organisation of two workshops:

The first workshop (SCW14 Jack Mackerel Benchmark Workshop) was held in July 2022, Seattle USA, for Jack mackerel to improve the scientific advice for Jack mackerel. The outcome of this workshop is available [online](#).

A second MSE Workshop was held in February 2023 to progress the development of a Management Strategy Evaluation for Jack mackerel by engaging with Members of the Commission. The outcome of this workshop is available in [SC11-Doc06](#).

Work Package 2: This part involved various database developments for the SPRFMO database. Work to redevelop and maximise the core functionality of the SPRFMO database to help ensure its longevity was completed in 2020, including an updated public facing SPRFMO Record of Vessels, and is available [online](#).

Work Package 3: The third part involved incorporated Geospatial support into the SPRFMO database. This piece of work has been contracted out to the new database provider and is scheduled for completion by October 2023.

Ongoing: Support to MSE for Jack mackerel in SPRFMO, EUR60,000 (NZ\$96,000 approximately).

This grant was signed in June 2022 and has a project duration of 18 months.

This action is to support scientific analysis and management in SPRFMO by further developing and implementing a Management Strategy Evaluation for Jack mackerel.

This work is being completed under contract by Wageningen Marine research with guidance from the SPRFMO jack mackerel working group.



Ongoing: Science based decision making, EUR120,000 (NZ\$191,000 approximately).

This is a new grant, that was signed in August 2022 and has a project duration of 24 months. This grant has two major objectives.

The first objective will build on previous works conducted over several years to prevent the occurrence of significant adverse impacts on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs). This objective is supported by 2 tasks (one on Reviewing how to define VME thresholds and modelling abundance of VMEs). These tasks being completed under contract by the New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries with guidance from the SPRFMO deepwater working group.

The second objective will build on previous works to continue to develop and update SPRFMOs management of the Jack mackerel fishery. The first task (to continue MSE Development for jack mackerel in SPRFMO) is being completed under contract by Wageningen Marine research with guidance from the SPRFMO jack mackerel working group. The funds allocated to the second task, to support connectivity and variability, are being used to support the activities of the Chair of the Jack mackerel connectivity task team.

- *The 3rd task, to support Otolith exchange leading to an age reading workshop, still needs to be assigned.*

Table 3: Status of scientific projects as at SC11

Working group	Subtask	Task lead(s)	Funding NZ\$	Project details
Jack mackerel	Develop and carry out an MSE	EU – contracted	90 000	EU: Support to MSE for Jack mackerel in the Sth Pacific (ends Nov 2023)
	Jack mackerel connectivity research Committed	JM connectivity task group	15 000	EU: Support to science-based decision making in SPRFMO (ends Aug 2024)
	Continue the development of the MSE framework etc	EU – contracted	60 000	EU: Support to science-based decision making in SPRFMO (ends Aug 2024)
	<i>Organise an otolith exchange leading up to an age reading workshop with experts from all relevant SPRFMO members etc.</i>	<i>Awaiting details</i>	<i>15 000</i>	<i>EU: Support to science-based decision making in SPRFMO (ends Aug 2024)</i>
Bottom fishing	Reviewing how to define the threshold between good state and SAI for VMEs at different spatial scales etc.	NZ - contracted	74 000	EU: Support to science-based decision making in SPRFMO (ends Aug 2024)
	Modelling abundance of VMEs.	NZ - contracted	15 000	EU: Support to science-based decision making in SPRFMO (ends Aug 2024)

3.2. Voluntary contributions from China

In addition to its earlier contributions, China has made two recent voluntary contributions totalling NZ\$53,332 for SC squid related research activities during 2023-24. These new funds (and the historic unused balance) mean a significant pool of money is available to support members with their national sampling programmes to collecting and analysing genetic samplings (Convention area and adjacent National Jurisdiction Areas) as per the Squid Connectivity item in the Scientific Committee Multi-Annual Plan.

- *The Secretariat would appreciate some direction on the expected allocation of these funds.*



3.3. Voluntary contributions from the USA

In September 2022, the Secretariat received a voluntary contribution from the US in the amount of NZ\$42,475 to support the SPRFMO Habitat Monitoring Symposium. This voluntary contribution is intended to be used to support the travel of invited speakers and costs associated with publishing the proceedings report.

- *The Secretariat would appreciate some direction on the expected allocation of these funds.*