

## 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Committee

Puerto Varas, Chile, 9 - 14 September 2018

### SC6-Doc28

Should SPRFMO join FIRMS (Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System)?

SPRFMO Secretariat

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### Background

At the third meeting of the SPRFMO Scientific Committee (SC) held in Port Vila, Vanuatu 28 September - 3 October 2015, the SC was invited to consider whether it would like to recommend that SPRFMO joins the Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) (SC-03-31, Secretariat Scientific Committee related activities<sup>1</sup>).

The final report of this SC meeting<sup>2</sup> when addressing whether SC would like to recommend that SPRFMO joins the FIRMS states “*It was decided to postpone a final recommendation to the next SC meeting*”.

However, this issue was not addressed in the following SC meetings, and as a consequence the Secretariat is bringing this issue back to the SC by providing an update on the developments of FIRMS since 2015.

### Current State of Play

FIRMS <http://firms.fao.org> draws together a unified partnership of 14 international organizations and 19 regional fishery bodies (RFBs) aiming to provide access to a wide range of high-quality information on the global monitoring and management of fishery marine resources.

The backbone information of FIRMS consists of Excel based Marine Resource and Fishery inventories (guidelines can be found at the following links<sup>3,4</sup>) where information provided by the partners is organized in a database and published in the form of Fact sheets, under two domains:

1. Marine Resource representing the biological domain (see examples below on Orange roughly - South East Atlantic (2016) and the Marine resources - Southeast Pacific (2011)):
  - <http://firms.fao.org/firms/resource/13377/en>
  - <http://firms.fao.org/firms/resource/11855/en>
2. Fishery representing the exploitation and usage domain (see examples below on the Southwest Pacific Bottom longline fishery - high seas (2009) and the Northeast Atlantic Mackerel fisheries (2017)):
  - <http://firms.fao.org/firms/fishery/963/en>
  - <http://firms.fao.org/firms/fishery/485/en>

This system provides the data owner with tools to ensure controlled dissemination of high quality and updated information. These Fact sheets can be accessed through dedicated search interfaces

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sprfmo.int/assets/Meetings/Meetings-2013-plus/SC-Meetings/3rd-SC-Meeting-2015/Papers/SC-03-31-Secretariat-SC-related-activities.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sprfmo.int/assets/Meetings/Meetings-2013-plus/SC-Meetings/3rd-SC-Meeting-2015/Report/SC-03-Final-report-14Oct15-A1-7.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS\\_FIRMS/Method\\_Guidelines/MarineResourcesInventoryGuidelines.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS_FIRMS/Method_Guidelines/MarineResourcesInventoryGuidelines.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS\\_FIRMS/Method\\_Guidelines/FisheriesInventoryGuidelines.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS_FIRMS/Method_Guidelines/FisheriesInventoryGuidelines.pdf)

and through the recently developed “Stocks and Fisheries map viewer”:  
<http://firms.fao.org/firms/stocks-fisheries-map-viewer>

FIRMS is disseminating only public data always acknowledging the provenance and ownership, and its content can be re-used by the partners<sup>1</sup>.

At the FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting held in June 2017 in Copenhagen, Web traffic analysis the period 2007-2016 showed a relevant increase through time in the overall number of page views and sessions

[http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/FIRMS/FIRMS\\_FSC10/inf8e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/FIRMS/FIRMS_FSC10/inf8e.pdf)

## Two options to join FIRMS

### 1. FIRMS “Partnership Arrangement”<sup>2</sup>:

The Partnership Arrangement is made of two sections:

- The standard Arrangement per se signed by FAO (on behalf of FIRMS Secretariat) and the applicant Partner, and
- Two Annexes:
  - Annex 1: Current FIRMS Partners on the date of signature by the two Parties, and
  - Annex 2: Outline and detailed arrangements on the nature of information and the conditions under which it is made available under the partnership arrangement. Find, as example, the Annex 2 of NAFO: [http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS\\_FIRMS/2013/2iNAFOe.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS_FIRMS/2013/2iNAFOe.pdf)

The benefits to the partners are:

- Improved transparency and accuracy of information on the status and trends of fisheries, while respecting confidentiality and security under which the information has been submitted,
- Dissemination of relevant fishery information,
- Gaining access to FIRMS editorial tools as well as to restricted information (e.g. GIS layers) and to relevant services of FAO, e.g. training in the use of FIRMS and other information products,
- Influence on the overall development of the FIRMS database structure, content and access policies.

The costs for the system are borne by FAO. Each Partner submits the agreed information in the formats required and covers the travel to FIRMS Steering Committee (FSC) meetings. Withdrawal from the Arrangement is possible at any time with three months’ notice.

### 2. “FIRMS Collaborative Arrangement”:

It will be discussed at the next FSC<sup>3</sup> early 2019. The Collaborative Arrangement aims at a more flexible collaboration (less duties and without the right to vote) within FIRMS.

## Final consideration

The SC is invited to consider whether it would like to recommend that SPRFMO joins the FIRMS.

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<sup>1</sup> Fact sheets can be embedded within the Partners’ websites without the FIRMS context

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS\\_FIRMS/Partnership\\_Arrangement/FIRMS\\_Partnership\\_Arrangement.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/FIGIS_FIRMS/Partnership_Arrangement/FIRMS_Partnership_Arrangement.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The FSC will be constituted of one member nominated by each Partner, including FAO in its capacity of Partner