
13TH MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (FAC)

Panama City, Panama, 26 to 27 February 2026

CTC 13–Doc 16 / FAC 13–Doc 13.2 Data Working Group Strategy and Workplan *DWG Chairperson / Secretariat*

1. Summary and recommendations

This paper presents to CTC and FAC the draft Data Working Group (DWG) Strategy and Three-Year Workplan for the period July 2025 to June 2028, together with an implementation budget for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 financial years. The Strategy represents an important investment in the performance of SPRFMO, designed to establish an integrated, secure and transparent data ecosystem that strengthens scientific assessments, compliance monitoring, and evidence-based decision-making across the Organisation. It also pursues tangible efficiency gains and reduced reporting burden for Members and CNCs through automation, improved validation, and direct digital submissions using secure interfaces.

CTC is invited to:

- **Recommend** that the Commission adopt the DWG Strategy and Three-Year Workplan (July 2025-June 2028) subject to any refinements.
- **Support** the proposal to amend CMM 02 Data Standards ([COMM14-Prop05](#)) to update Annexes 9 and 10 to the latest ISSCFG/FV standards for adoption by COMM14.
- **Note** that implementation of the workplan will require close coordination between the Secretariat, DWG, SC and CTC, and active participation by Members and CNCs.

FAC is invited to:

- **Note** the implementation budget for 2026-27 and 2027-28 and its inclusion in the draft budget for Financial Year 2026-27 (refer FAC13-Doc13).
- **Note** that the two-year budget totals NZD 403,000 and represents a NZD 215,000 increase above baseline hosting and maintenance costs over the two-year period.
- **Note** that voluntary contributions have also been offered from Chile and the FAO in the order of \$130,000 towards delivering Objective 4 of the strategy, to 'build capacity and promote data literacy'.
- **Invite** additional voluntary contributions and in-kind support from Members, CNCs and Observers to co-fund activities under the Strategy

2. Background and Context

SPRFMO's data systems underpin both scientific work (stock assessments, performance indicators, and research) and compliance activities (monitoring, reconciliation, and risk identification). At SC13, the Scientific Committee reviewed SPRFMO's data governance and delivery arrangements through the work of the Data Working Group (DWG), noting the central role of timely, high-quality and well-governed data in enabling scientific assessments and supporting broader SPRFMO functions. In that context, the SC endorsed the Secretariat's draft data management strategy (including the prioritisation of data needs), which was then elaborated and refined through the DWG into this DWG Strategy and Workplan. The DWG met once virtually



and corresponded in the period September 2025-January 2026 to finalise the draft which is now presented to CTC and FAC for information, any further improvements, and recommendation to the Commission for adoption.

3. Strategy Overview

The DWG Strategy is organised around four strategic objectives:

- Objective 1 – Strengthen Data Standards and Governance: Update and maintain SPRFMO data codes and templates under CMM 02 (Data Standards), strengthen governance of data management processes, and support Member engagement and alignment with global standards.
- Objective 2 – Automate and Integrate Core Data Systems: Transition from fragmented, semi-manual systems toward a unified, automated Fisheries Information Management System (FIMS), integrating the RoV, VMS, Catch, Inspection, Observer, Transshipment and EM-related data flows using APIs and secure web services.
- Objective 3 – Enhance Data Quality, Access, Security and Transparency: Implement automated validation, dashboards and reconciliation tools; improve access to non-confidential data through public portals; and strengthen confidentiality safeguards and access controls.
- Objective 4 – Build Capacity and Promote Data Literacy: Deliver training, user guides and technical assistance so Members and CNCPs can submit, manage and use data effectively.

4. Budget implications (2026-27–2027-28)

A budget to implement the Strategy over the next two financial years is provided at Annex 1. All values are expressed in NZD and align with the 'budget category' and 'budget item' structure used in the draft budget presented to FAC13 (FAC13-Doc13).

The total costs are NZD 403,000 over the two years: NZD 261,000 for 2026-27 and NZD 142,000 for 2027-28. This represents an increase in the Commission's investment above baseline hosting and maintenance of NZD 170,000 in 2026-27 and NZD 45,000 in 2027-28 (NZD 215,000 over two years).

Key budget drivers include:

- Database development in 2026-27 to enhance existing functionalities and develop new modules (Port State Measures; Compliance Case Log) and undertake data migration for updated gear/vessel/species code lists.
- Member implementation and support activities, including development and update of manuals, guidelines and e-learning, with translation into key Member languages.
- Annual cloud hosting, storage, backup, licensing, and ongoing database support and maintenance.
- Annual capacity-building workshops and travel to support Member and CNCP participation.

5. Recent and Committed Resourcing

Over the last two financial years (2024–25 and 2025–26), approximately NZ\$360,000 has been invested in strengthening SPRFMO's data capability (Table 1). This expenditure has covered database hosting and ongoing technical support, targeted data and database improvements/enhancements to uplift quality and performance, the development of a dedicated data-entry system to streamline and standardise submissions, API development to enable transshipment data integration with other systems, processing and integrating historical datasets to improve continuity and analytics, and the production of documentation and reporting to support operational use, transparency, and decision-making. Some of the activities are still in development and budgets have been committed to their implementation.



Voluntary contributions have also been offered from Chile and the FAO in the order of \$130,000 towards delivering Objective 4 of the strategy, to 'build capacity and promote data literacy'. The funding and activity details (learning material; workshop timing, location, format) are being confirmed, and will be informed by input on this draft Strategy from the annual meeting.

Table 1: Investments in strengthening SPRFMO's data capability over the last two financial years (2024–25 and 2025–26) and voluntary contributions identified for 2026-27.

Source	Funding	Activity	Timeframe
Budget allocation	\$92,000	Database hosting and support	2024-25 and 2025-26
NOAA MoU grant	\$115,521	Database/Data (Improvement/Enhancement)	1 October 2024 - 30 June 2025
EU grant 101189418 Support to science-based decision making in SPRFMO	\$150,000 ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a dedicated data entry system API Development for Transshipment Data Integration: Historical Data Processing and Integration Documentation and Reporting 	1 June 2024 - 31 May 2026
Chile voluntary contribution	~\$40,000 (amount to be confirmed)	Capacity Building and Regional Training Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat travel 	2026-27
FAO voluntary contribution	~\$90,000 (amount to be confirmed)	Capacity Building and Regional Training Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member delegates' and Secretariat travel Learning materials 	2026-27
Total	\$485,521		

6. Key considerations for FAC and CTC

- Compliance value and operational readiness: Deliverables such as reconciliation tools, EM data ingestion protocols, Port State Measures development and the Compliance Case Log system support enhanced monitoring and timely case management. CTC engagement will help ensure operational needs are reflected in design and testing.
- Member burden reduction and adoption: The Strategy depends on uptake of APIs, portals and standardised templates. Training and implementation support (including translation) are critical to adoption by a wide range of Members and CNCPs.

¹ Largely committed on on-going development work: transshipments API, data entry interfaces learning and documentation and reporting.



- Security and confidentiality: Role Based Access Control, strengthened access controls and secure web services are foundational to protecting sensitive data and enabling controlled data sharing.
- Budget phasing and annual refinement: Cost estimates may be refined annually in consultation with the DWG Chair, Secretariat and external partners.
- External partnerships and co-funding: Where feasible, the Secretariat will seek to align work with external initiatives and potential partners to reduce duplication and maximise value, while maintaining SPRFMO's authoritative data holdings for science and compliance.

7. Risks and mitigation

- Delayed or uneven Member adoption: Mitigate through early pilot participation, clear user guides, phased roll-out, and dedicated implementation support.
- Data standard transition impacts: Mitigate through staged migration plans, validation tools, and advance communication of code-list changes.
- Cybersecurity and access risks: Mitigate through RBAC, secure API gateways, auditing/logging, and periodic security reviews.
- Budget uncertainty and scope creep: Mitigate through annual prioritisation with DWG Chair, transparent reporting to SC/CTC, and tight change-control for new modules.



Annex 1: Data Working Group Strategy and Workplan

1. Goal

To establish an integrated, secure and transparent data ecosystem that supports scientific assessments, compliance monitoring, and evidence-based decision-making across the SPRFMO area of competence.

This goal reflects SPRFMO's commitment to improving the quality, accessibility, and interoperability of fisheries data through modern technologies, robust governance, and enhanced Member collaboration.

2. Strategic Objectives

The DWG will pursue the following four strategic objectives over the 2025–2028 period. Each objective is framed to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) and directly contributes to the overall goal.

Through these objectives, the strategy aims not only to enhance the quality, interoperability, and timeliness of SPRFMO data but also to deliver tangible efficiency gains and cost reductions for Members and CNCPs. By automating data processes, improving data validation workflows, and enabling direct digital submissions through integrated systems, Members will experience significant savings in administrative time, reduced reporting burdens, and fewer data correction cycles. This will minimise duplication of effort, lower system maintenance costs, and increase the return on previous investments in data management infrastructure. Ultimately, this strategy strengthens Members' capacity to access, analyse, and use high-quality data for compliance and scientific purposes—ensuring that every contribution of data translates more efficiently into knowledge and policy value.

8. Objective 1: Strengthen Data Standards and Governance

To ensure that SPRFMO data is coherent, interoperable, and consistent with global standards. The DWG will oversee updates to SPRFMO's data codes and templates under CMM 02 (Data Standards), enhance governance of the data management process, and promote Member engagement in defining and adopting new standards. SPRFMO will also engage in international data standard setting to promote coherence. This will reinforce the scientific and compliance integrity of SPRFMO data.

9. Objective 2: Automate and Integrate Core Data Systems

To transition SPRFMO from fragmented, semi-manual data systems to a unified, automated Fisheries Information Management System (FIMS). This includes full integration of the Record of Vessels (RoV), VMS, Catch, Observer, and Transshipment databases, and Electronic Monitoring (EM) data supported by APIs and secure web services that facilitate real-time data exchange and validation.

10. Objective 3: Enhance Data Quality, Access & Security, and Transparency

To improve the accuracy, timeliness, and accessibility of data submitted by Members and CNCPs. This includes implementing automated validation routines, developing self-service interfaces to the modules, dashboards and reconciliation tools, and ensuring transparent and secure access to non-confidential data through public portals and reports. It further includes the enhancement of access controls and security protocols to ensure that sensitive data are accessible only to authorised users and are protected through appropriate confidentiality safeguards.

11. Objective 4: Build Capacity and Promote Data Literacy

To strengthen the capacity of Members and CNCPs to submit, manage, and use data effectively. Through targeted training workshops, user guides, and technical assistance, Members and CNCPs will be equipped to engage with the evolving data systems and contribute to improved compliance and scientific outcomes.



3. Workplan Framework (2025–2028)

The workplan is structured into **phased implementation blocks** that align with the strategic objectives. Each phase covers key deliverables, timelines, responsible actors, and measures of success.

12.Phase 1: Foundation & Standardisation (July 2025 – June 2026)

Objective	Key Activities	Deliverables	Indicators
OBJ 1: Strengthen Data Standards and Governance	Convene inaugural DWG meeting and adopt 3-year workplan	Approved DWG Strategy and Workplan	DWG Strategy formally adopted
	Conduct comprehensive review of existing systems and data flows	State of Data Systems Report submitted to SC and CTC for review	Gaps and inefficiencies identified with improvement options
	Update CMM 02-2025 Annexes 9 and 10 to latest ISSCFG/FV standards, and reference lists	Updated Annexes adopted by COMM14	Data standards improved, consistent with international standards
OBJ 2: Automate and Integrate Core Systems	Improve Record of Vessels, develop Catch, enhance Transshipment and strengthen the system security with Role Based Access Control (RBAC) and integrate with relevant systems	Improved RoV, developed catch interface and functionality, production-ready API and Member user guide	80% of actively reporting Members trained on new and improved system. At least 1 Member supported and using Transshipment API
OBJ 3: Enhance Data Quality & Access	Develop self-serve data portal access, Member and Secretariat dashboards, SC data request and access module and public data portal	Interactive dashboard, public data access portal, Members only pages and SC request module released	Positive Member feedback
OBJ 4: Capacity & Literacy	Conduct virtual and onsite training on the improved Fisheries Information Management System	Workshop held; report circulated; user guides disseminated	80% of the actively reporting participants report improved understanding

13.Phase 2: Integration & Automation (July 2026 – June 2027)

Objective	Key Activities	Deliverables	Indicators
OBJ 1: Standards & Governance	Review the established systems and data flows	State of the Information Systems report submitted to the SC/CTC	Adopted by SC/CTC
	Develop Observer Data API and Case Log System and Port State Measures development.		
OBJ 2: Automation & Integration	Develop secure API based data ingestion protocol to enable Electronic Monitoring (EM) data submission following the operation model described in paragraph 4 of SC13-Info 01 information paper	Fully functional API, Port State Measures module and internal Case Log tool	Operational testing completed
	Implement automated RoV-VMS-Catch-Transshipment reconciliation tool	Cross-referencing engine live	Discrepancy alerts functional
OBJ 3: Data Quality & Access	Pilot direct data upload in data portal	Successful pilot among 3+ Members	Positive feedback and performance metrics
OBJ 4: Capacity & Literacy	Conduct regional workshop on data quality management	Workshop completed; user guides updated and shared with members	Improved data submission timeliness



14. Phase 3: Optimisation & Innovation (July 2027 – June 2028)

Objective	Key Activities	Deliverables	Indicators
OBJ 2: Automation & Integration	Conduct full system integration review	Report confirming interoperability of all modules	100% modules connected
OBJ 3: Data Quality & Access	Launch public data dashboard for non-confidential datasets	Public portal live on sprfmo.org	Positive stakeholder feedback
	Implement enhanced reconciliation and reporting automation	99.9% standard reports automated	Secretariat time reduced by 50%
OBJ 4: Capacity & Literacy	Deliver advanced Member training on data analytics and system use	Capacity-building workshop #3 delivered	90% participants demonstrate improved competency
OBJ 1: Governance	Conduct DWG three-year review and develop next strategy (2028–2031)	Review report and updated DWG Strategy	Approved by SC/CTC

4. Implementation Budget (2026-27–2027-28)

A budget for implementing the DWG Strategy and Workplan over the next two financial years is below. The cost estimates are indicative and may be refined annually in consultation with the DWG Chair, Secretariat, and external partners. All values are expressed in NZD.

The 'budget category' and 'budget item' terms align with the draft budget presented to FAC13. The total annual costs represent an investment increase of \$170,000 and \$45,000 above what would otherwise be baseline database hosting and maintenance costs in 2026-27 and 2027-28 respectively.

Budget Category	Budget Item	Description	Year	2026-27	2027-28	Total
Data	Database Hosting	Cloud hosting, data storage, backup, and licensing	Annual	\$39,000	\$42,000	\$81,000
Data	Database Support & Maintenance	Database support & maintenance	Annual	\$52,000	\$55,000	\$107,000
Data	Database Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancement of existing functionalities and development of new Integrated Fisheries Management Information System modules (Port State Measures, Compliance Case Log); - Data migration - Adoption of and migration to new Gear type codes and Vessel Codes and update of Species lists 	2026-2027	\$100,000	\$-	\$100,000
Data	Member Implementation & Support	1. Development & update of user manuals, guidelines, e-learning modules, and translation into key Member languages <i>[Confirming costs with possible suppliers]</i> 2. Annual capacity-building workshops for Members/CNCPs. Travel cost for Data Manager and Members/CNCPs data	2026-2027; 2027-2028	\$50,000 (Plus \$50,000 voluntary contributions)	\$25,000	\$75,000



		contacts – venue, delegates' travel				
Meetings & Travel	Other Meetings and Travel	Annual capacity-building workshops for Members/CNCPs. Travel cost for Data Manager and Members/CNCPs data contacts – Secretariat travel.	2026-2027; 2027-2028	\$20,000 (Plus \$80,000 voluntary contributions)	\$20,000	\$40,000
Total				261,000	\$142,000	\$403,000
Increase above baseline hosting & maintenance				\$170,000	\$45,000	\$215,000

5. Monitoring, Reporting, and Success Metrics

The DWG will report annually to the SC and CTC. Key metrics include:

- Reduction in data processing and validation time by 40% by 2027.
- 90% of the actively reporting Members submitting data through automated systems by 2028.
- 100% of standard reports automated by 2028.
- At least 2 capacity-building workshops held with 80% Member participation.

Annual reviews will be led by the Data Manager with the DWG Chair to track implementation progress and financial utilisation.

6. Sustainability and Future Direction

By June 2028, SPRFMO will operate a fully integrated data platform supported by trained users, standardised processes, and robust governance. The DWG will then initiate planning for the 2028–2031 cycle. This will be guided by objectives identified at the time but would at least include effective systems maintenance and implementation and could include focusing on artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, and enhanced interoperability with global fisheries information systems.