

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

Panama City, Panama, 26 to 27 February 2026

FAC 13 – Doc 11 Scientific Support Fund *Secretariat*

1. Summary and recommendations

This paper summarises the status and outlook of the SPRFMO Scientific Support Fund.

The FAC is invited to:

- **Note** that the Secretariat has improved its reporting on the Scientific Support Fund to enhance transparency and usability for Members and the Secretariat.
- **Note** that the SSF has been well resourced and utilised by Members throughout the year, and a combination of voluntary contributions and rescheduling of planned activities has created healthy end of year balances last year and this year.
- **Recommend** that the Commission approve the accrual to the 2026-27 financial year of unspent 2025-26 appropriations (forecast to be \$157 505) for the continuation of planned activities.
- **Note** that this accrual would be sufficient to fund planned activities for 2026-27 therefore the Scientific Support Fund Budget Category 10 is zero in the draft budget for the Financial Year 2026-27 (FAC13-Doc13).
- **Consider** whether the current annual planning and budgeting cycle fulfils the requirement for a review of the budget category at least every four years, or whether a fuller review of the category and Fund is warranted.

2. Fund Purpose and Management

Annual appropriations from the 'Scientific Support Fund' (SSF) budget category and science-related voluntary contributions (VCs) are transferred into a separate SSF account. Together with grant funding and in-kind contributions, the SSF resources the Scientific Committee (SC) Multi-Annual Workplan.

Financial Regulation 2.4 provides 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.*"

3. Fund Status and Use

The Secretariat has changed how it reports on the SSF to align with the financial year (July-June) to improve transparency and usability for Members and the Secretariat:

- Table 1 reports the status of the SSF in the prior financial year based on actual income and expenditure.
- Table 2 reports on the SSF in the current financial year based on actuals in the July-December period and forecast January-June.

This approach aligns with the audited financial statements, reporting on other SPRFMO funds, and will enable comparison between forecast and actual SSF spending in future.

Unspent 2024-25 appropriations totalled **\$116,510** (Table 1) and accrued to the 2025-26 financial year (Table 2). Unspent 2025-26 appropriations are forecast to total **\$157,505** (Table 2) and, subject to Commission approval, would accrue to the 2026-27 financial year (Table 3).



Table 1: Scientific Support Funds Status (Financial Year ended 30 June 2025)

Opening Balance as of 01 July 2024		127 328
Expenses for the period from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025		
Sep 2024	SC12 invited expert – climate change (VC-USA)	5 939
Sep 2024	SC12 invited expert – squid workshop	6 823
Oct 2024	SC12 jack mackerel connectivity workshop	6 489
Oct 2024	SC12 invited expert – jack mackerel connectivity	7 551
Jan 2025	Squid population genomic studies - collect and analyse samples (Convention area and adjacent National Jurisdiction Areas) (VC-China)	84 948
Jan 2025	SC12 invited expert – jack mackerel assessment	14 115
Jan 2025	Climate change compile, review and assess climate-related data	19 363
Jul 2024 - Jun 2025	Bank Fees on International Payments	72
Subtotal - Expenses		(145 300)
Income for the period from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025		
Jul 2024	COMM12 Budget Appropriation	40 000
Sep 2024	USA Voluntary Contribution - SC12 Related	16 260
Nov 2024	China Voluntary Contribution - squid population genomic studies	30 648
Jun 2025	Vanuatu Voluntary Contribution - assessment expert & benchmark workshop	45 000
Jul 2024 - Jun 2025	Interest Received	2 574
Subtotal - Income		134 482
Balance as at 30 June 2025		116 510



Table 2: Forecast Status of the Scientific Support Fund up to 30 June 2026

Opening Balance as of 01 July 2025			116 510
Forecast Expenses for the period from 01 July 2025 to 30 June 2026			
Jul 2025	MSE workshop (VC-CHL) (plus EU Grant)	2 000	
Sep 2025	SC12 invited expert – climate change (VC-USA)	950	
Sep 2025	SC13 invited expert – jack mackerel assessment (VC-VUT)	15 900	
Apr/May 2026	Squid workshop	42 000	
Mar/Apr 2026	Squid population genomic studies - collect and analyse samples (Convention area and adjacent National Jurisdiction Areas) (VC-China)	34 000	
May 2026	Jack mackerel benchmark workshop (VC-VUT & VC-CHL)	54 000	
Apr 2026	Publication of a Special Issue of Scientific Journal, on the 2023 Symposium on State of the Art of Habitat Monitoring (VC-US)	9 731	
Subtotal - Expense from 01/07/2025 to 30 June 2026			(158 581)
Forecast Income for the period from 01 July 2025 to 30 June 2026			
Jul 2025	COMM13 Budget Appropriation	70 600	
Sep 2025	PEW Voluntary Contribution - squid assessment simulation workshop	17 050	
Sep 2025	China Voluntary Contribution - squid population genomic studies	51 045	
Sep 2025	USA Voluntary Contribution - jack mackerel MSE	34 381	
Jan 2026	Chile voluntary contribution - benchmark workshop	24 000	
Jul 2024 - Dec 2025	Other Income - Interest Received	2 500	
Subtotal - Income from 01/07/2025 to 30 June 2026			199 576
Forecast Balance as at 30 June 2026			157 505



4. Budget Allocation

Planned scientific activities for 2026-27 are estimated to cost \$153,000 (Table 3). These activities are extracted from the SC13 Multi-Annual Workplan ([SC13-Report](#), Annex 7). Subject to Commission approval, the unspent appropriations from 2025-26 would be sufficient to cover this. The draft Organisational budget for 2026-27 (FAC13-Doc13) therefore has a zero allocation for the Scientific Support Fund Budget Category 10.

Table 3: Resourcing of SC13 Multi-Annual Workplan Activities

Subtask	Timeline	2026-27	2027-28
Jack Mackerel Working Group - Jack mackerel assessment experts	Annual cost	17 000	18 000
Jack Mackerel Working Group - Jack mackerel MSE workshop	2026	35 000	
Squid Working Group - Squid Workshop - assessment, simulated assessment	Annual cost	25 000	25 000
Squid Working Group - Squid assessment	2026	51 000	
Ecosystems Working Group - Jack mackerel Connectivity	2026	25 000	
TOTAL COSTS		153 000	43 000
SSF available from 2025-26 surplus		157 505	0
Annual Budget Appropriation		0	43 000

5. Fund Review

Financial Regulation 2.5 provides that the Commission will review the 'Scientific Support' (and 'Developing States') budget category at least once every four years. The SSF account was established in 2017. The budget category allocation is considered by FAC and the Commission each year at the annual meeting on the basis of reporting and requests from the SC.

The Developing States Fund is similarly considered by FAC and Commission each year though the Fund itself has been subject to broader reviews (FAC13-Doc10). This is brought to the attention of FAC to consider whether the current annual planning and budgeting process around scientific support is sufficient or whether a fuller review of the budget category and the SSF is warranted. Such a review might include the fund's purpose, planning, budgeting, funding and accounting mechanisms, as suggested for the regular review of all funds in the draft Finance and Administration Committee Workplan (FAC13-Doc16).