
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).