

# **Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean (SPRFMO)**

## **Basic Instrument**

[Convention](#) on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean

## **Implementing Legislation**

N/A, the United States signed the SPRFMO Convention on 31 January 2011. The Convention entered into force 24 August 2012. The U.S. Senate provided its advice and consent to ratification of the Convention in April 2014. The Senate subsequently introduced a bill to implement the Convention, which did not receive Congressional approval. Thus, the U.S. domestic process to ratify the Convention and enact implementing legislation remains ongoing.

## **Member Nations/Entities**

Australia, Belize, Chile, China, Cook Islands, Cuba, the European Union, Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, Chinese Taipei (as a fishing entity) and Vanuatu

## **Cooperating Non-Contracting Non Parties**

Colombia, Ecuador, France (on behalf of its overseas territories), Liberia, Panama, Peru and the United States

## **Secretariat Headquarters**

SPRFMO Secretariat  
PO Box 3797,  
Wellington 6140,  
NEW ZEALAND  
Tel: +64- 4- 499 9889  
FAX: +64- 4- 473 9579

Web Address: <http://www.sprfmo.int>

## **Budget**

Financial regulations (including a formula for contributions), were adopted at the first Commission Meeting. The contributions formula consists of a base fee and components for national wealth and catch of pelagic and demersal fisheries resources.

## **U.S. Representation**

If the United States ratifies the Convention, the U.S. representation will be determined in the implementing legislation. It is expected that the Pacific Islands Regional Administrator will be designated as Commissioner for the United States.

## **Description**

Beginning in 2006, a series of International Consultations were held with the objective of establishing a regime for conservation and management of non-highly migratory fish stocks and protection of biodiversity in the marine environment in high seas areas in the South Pacific. Following the successful conclusion of the International Consultations, the participants conducted a series of meetings of a [Preparatory Conference](#) to prepare for the first meeting of the [Commission](#) of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization, which took place

from 28 January to 1 February, 2013. The most recent meeting of the Commission took place from 2 to 6 February, 2015.

#### A. Mission/Purpose

The objective of the Convention is, through the application of the precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources and, in so doing, to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which these resources occur.

#### B. Organizational Structure:

The Organization structure includes the following:

- Commission;
- Scientific Committee;
- Compliance and Technical Committee;
- Eastern Sub-regional Management Committee;
- Western Sub-regional Management Committee;
- Finance and Administration Committee;
- Secretariat.

As a general rule, decisions by the Commission will be adopted by consensus, however there are provisions for voting, if that is determined to be necessary. There is also an objection procedure.

#### C. Programs

At its first meeting, the Commission adopted a number of binding conservation measures, including limits in the fishery for jack mackerel (*Trachurus murphyi*) in the Convention Area to vessels flagged to Members and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCs), prohibition on the use of large-scale pelagic driftnets and all deepwater gillnets in the Convention Area and advance notification of Members and CNCs whose flagged vessels seek to transit the Convention Area with gillnets onboard, standards for the collection, reporting, verification and exchange of data that requires reporting on fishing activities, and procedures for establishing a list of vessels presumed to have carried out illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities in the SPRFMO Convention Area.

The second Commission meeting was held in Manta, Ecuador from 27 to 31 January, 2014. SPRFMO adopted six conservation and management measures including a follow-on measure for the management of jack mackerel (*Trachurus murphyi*). In connection with the jack mackerel measure adopted, SPRFMO also adopted a jack mackerel rebuilding plan and developed specific requests to the Scientific Committee for advice on jack mackerel stock status. The other measures adopted include: a measure for bottom fishing; a measure on seabird bycatch; a measure on port state inspections; a measure on the development of a vessel monitoring scheme (VMS); and a measure for the establishment of a SPRFMO record of fishing vessels.

#### **Recent Developments**

The third Commission meeting was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 2 to 6 February 2015. SPRFMO adopted a new conservation and management measure for jack mackerel, a conservation and management measure for transshipment and other transfer operations, and a measure for a Commission compliance and monitoring scheme. The United States, after signing the Convention, continues to prepare the necessary documents for ratification and implementation of the Treaty.

## **Staff Contacts**

### *NOAA Fisheries:*

Michael Tosatto  
Regional Administrator  
Pacific Islands Regional Office  
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA  
Telephone: (808) 725-5001  
Email: [Michael.tosatto@noaa.gov](mailto:Michael.tosatto@noaa.gov)

Rini Ghosh  
Fishery Policy Analyst  
Pacific Islands Regional Office  
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA  
Telephone: (808) 725-5033  
Email: [rini.ghosh@noaa.gov](mailto:rini.ghosh@noaa.gov)

### Department of State:

Kelly Kryc  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C. Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520-7818  
Telephone: (202) 647-1952  
Email: [krycka@state.gov](mailto:krycka@state.gov)