



**COMMISSION  
FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**  
Manila, Philippines  
3 – 7 December 2017

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**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FUND**

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**WCPFC14-2017-DP07  
3 November 2017**

**Paper by FFA Member CCMs**



3 November 2017

Feleti P. Teo OBE  
Executive Director  
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission  
PO Box 2356, Kolonia  
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Feleti,

**Special Requirements Fund**

I write on behalf of the 17 members of the Forum Fisheries Agency in my capacity as the Chair of the Forum Fisheries Committee.

At WCPFC13, FFA Members raised a key issue in relation to the **voluntary** nature of the Special Requirements Fund. Given the obligation on the Commission to assist SIDS flowing from Article 30, FFA members proposed in our Delegation Paper 17 that the Commission consider the need to ensure the sustainability of this Fund.

It was recognised that the dominant use of the Fund has been to support travel of SIDS nationals to participate in meetings – pointing to a clear SIDS need. In addition, in order to ensure effective participation, meetings are increasingly being attended by at least 2 SIDS nationals per delegation. This is a key priority for FFA Members at this upcoming WCPFC meeting.

WCPFC13 agreed to the recommendation of FAC10 that a virtual intersessional working group (IWG) be established to review current guidelines for the Fund including its scope of use, prioritisation, allocation authority, securing of funding at an appropriate level and transparency of operation. It was also agreed that the outcomes of this work would be presented to FAC11, with a view to submitting a proposal to WCPFC14.

In addition, at TCC13, FFA Members stated that whilst some specific needs have been clearly articulated and several sources of assistance made available, it seems that the ‘dots need to be connected’ between which sources of assistance can best meet which needs, and where gaps lie.

In response, TCC13 agreed to the FFA proposal to recommend to WCPFC14 that the Commission considers an approach to addressing the specific challenge of making the links between which sources of assistance can best meet SIDS and Territories’ needs, and how that assistance can be systematically tracked to ensure its delivery.

We sincerely thank Liz Brierley of Australia, the IWG Chair, for her comprehensive and hard work, including consultations and discussions with members of the working group on the issue of ensuring the sustainability of the SRF and this broader issue of ‘connecting the dots’ between SIDS’ needs and funding sources. We have considered her latest proposal provided in WCPFC Circular 2017/81 dated 17 October and make the following comments:

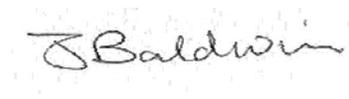
1. Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)
  - (i) We support the concept of the SIP as we view this as the overall mechanism for making the links between the SIDS' needs and funding sources. It will assist with pulling all the capacity needs together, guiding investments and identifying sources of funding.
  - (ii) FFA Members' view is that the objective of the SIP is to build SIDS capacity to (a) participate and (b) implement Commission measures.
  - (iii) It is fundamental that the SIP is SIDS-driven.
  - (iv) As advised in DP16 to WCPFC13, whilst Members continue to consider the utility of the SIDS Checklist (as agreed by WCPFC11 which would serve as a guide for the key priority areas for targeted assistance) and how to best map out the strategy of assistance to SIDS, the SIDS Checklist currently consists of the individual capacity needs identified in the Final Compliance Monitoring Report. In setting out the SIDS' priority needs, we see the SIP incorporating the concept of the 'FFA SIDS Checklist' — essentially, the member-driven SIP would now include the priority areas of assistance as articulated by SIDS.
  - (v) We recognise that resources will be required to develop the SIP, and propose that the Commission allocate funds for this work to take place in 2018.
  - (vi) We also concur with the Chair's proposal that the SIP is established for a 3 year trial period.
  
2. Amend the Financial Regulations
  - (i) In our DP17 to WCPFC13, FFA Members underlined the specific purpose of the SRF is to **“improve the capacity of individuals within the Commission's SIDS members to help States fulfil their obligations under the Convention and participate effectively in its work.”** In addition, the intent behind the establishment of the Fund is clearly to ensure that developing countries can “effectively participate” in the work of the Commission.
  - (ii) Moreover, as FFA Members have noted the complexity and diversity of issues have expanded and evolved, so it must also be recognised that it is impossible for one representative to cover all the issues at these meetings.
  - (iii) Therefore, in order to ensure SIDS can effectively participate, FFA Members propose that Regulation 3.5 of the Financial Regulations is amended as follows:

*3.5 The draft budget shall include an item specifying the costs required to finance the travel and subsistence for ~~one~~ two representatives from each developing State Party to the Convention and, where appropriate, territories and possessions, to each meeting of the Commission and to meetings of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission*
  
3. Special Requirements Fund
  - (i) Provided the Commission is able to agree to amend the Financial Regulations, as proposed above, FFA members could agree to maintain the current voluntary nature of the SRF.
  - (ii) We also propose that we revisit this position at the end of the 3 year trial period for the SIP to ensure that the Fund has been maintained and there have been no issues with availing funds in response to SIDS needs.
  - (iii) We also propose that the Principles, Guidelines and Operational Procedures for the SRF are strengthened to assist the ED in assessing and selecting projects to be funded by the SRF.

We welcome views on this proposal, so that we can collectively find a solution to assist the Commission in meeting its obligations.

We look forward to discussing this proposal with CCMs in Manila and would welcome any inquiries before them, which should be directed to the FFA Secretariat ([manu.tupou-roosen@ffa.int](mailto:manu.tupou-roosen@ffa.int)).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Baldwin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

Jenny Baldwin

Chair

Forum Fisheries Committee

CC: Liz Brierley, Chair of the virtual Intersessional Working Group