



**COMMISSION
FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA
10 – 14 December 2018

**PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR THE EFFECTIVE
PARTICIPATION OF SIDS**

**WCPFC15-2018-DP26
9 December 2018**

FFA Member CCMs



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Feleti P. Teo OBE
Executive Director
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Feleti,

FFA Member proposal to amend the financial Regulations for the effective participation of SIDS

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Chair of the Forum Fisheries Committee. Firstly, FFA Members extend our thanks to the chair of the virtual working group on the Special Requirements Fund, Liz Brierley, for bravely tackling this priority issue, and the production of the Strategic Investment Plan to better structure the Commission's responses to capacity development needs.

We note that addressing the effective participation of SIDS has been an issue we have raised for a number of years and refer CCMs to our Delegation Paper 7 submitted to WCPFC14 last year for background information.

Effective participation by all members is a fundamental issue that the WCPF Commission needs to respond to. SIDS make up a significant component of the Membership of the WCPF Commission, and the bulk of the fishery occurs within SIDS waters. Effective participation is about ensuring that SIDS can attend and participate in Commission meetings, but at the same time be provided the opportunity to build the national level capacity and capability of individuals to comprehend the administrative, technical and operational elements across all aspects of the Commission work. 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. In order to ensure effective participation, meetings are increasingly being attended by at least 2 SIDS nationals per delegation.

The strategic investment plan that was developed in 2018 highlights one key deficiency in the capacity development support system the Commission has for developing States. That is, deficient provision of support for the effective participation in the work of the Commission.

Whilst the work of the Commission is of upmost importance to FFA Members to ensure the sustainable management of tuna stocks in the WCPO, there is a real and genuine struggle for small fisheries administrations to resource participation, and ensure that staff have the capability to adequately engage and therefore make decisions to progress the management of WCPO fish stocks.

FFA Members consider that the most efficient way to support effective participation is through the revision of Regulation 3.5 of the Financial Regulations, to be 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.

Accompanying this proposal is a SIDS impact assessment as follows:

a. Who is required to implement the proposal?

All CCMs will be required to implement this proposal as a competent of their financial contributions. The proposal would be administered by the WCPFC Secretariat to support travel arrangements for developing State CCMs.

b. Which CCMs would this proposal impact and in what way(s) and what proportion?

SIDS and other Developing State CCMs would benefit from this proposal, where additional participation would be provided.

All CCMs would be impacted by this proposal as it would be sustained by financial contributions.

c. Are there linkages with other proposals or instruments in other regional fisheries management organizations or international organizations that reduce the burden of implementation?

We note the suggested funding proposals contained in the draft Special Requirements Fund Strategic Investment Plan uses examples of IATTC funding mechanisms which add a percentage increase to annual Commission budgets. However, to ensure that effective participation of developing State CCMs is secured, incorporating the required level of funding in to the financial regulations will allow for more precise accounting.

At present developing States must investigate and access resources from various external funding sources to support additional participants in delegations. This adds additional administrative work to small fisheries administrations.

Deficiencies and declining trends in funds available to support developing State participation in the work of RFMOs and other international fora has occurred for several years now. Notably the UNCLOS Part VII fund. In response, and noting the need to continue to support meeting participation, succession planning and capacity development, FAO apportions its global umbrella assistance funds for travel (60%) and projects (40%).

d. Does the proposal affect development opportunities for SIDS?

Yes. This proposal supports development opportunities by facilitating SIDS participation in the work of the Commission. SIDS are able to provide input in to the development of CMMs, and ensure that they can advise the Commission on the special requirements and considerations specific to SIDS as measures are designed.

e. Does the proposal affect SIDS domestic access to resources and development aspirations?

There are no expected impacts on domestic access or development opportunities.

f. What resources, including financial and human capacity, are needed by SIDS to implement the proposal?

The proposal will require financial contributions from all CCMs, including SIDS.

This proposal seeks to raise the minimum benchmark in how the Commission facilitates SIDS participation in WCPFC forums, and opportunities to engage in the management of WCPO fish stocks.

g. What mitigation measures are included in the proposal?

No mitigation measures are identified, as the responsibility to fund the proposal is shared among all CCMs. It is recognised that potential funding mechanisms are proposed in the SRF SIP, however there is greater uncertainty in these approaches, and FFA Members will have to review how each of the options in the SIP may impact SIDS and other CCMs.

h. What assistance mechanisms and associated timeframe, including training and financial support, are included in the proposal to avoid a disproportionate burden on SIDS?

No disproportionate burden on SIDS has been identified by this proposal.

Effective participation by all members in the processes of the Commission is not only an obligation of the Commission as provided in its Convention, it is fundamental to the success of the work of the Commission. The complexity and diversity of issues considered by the Commission have expanded significantly over the years and is demanding more of all members. Those demands are significantly greater on SIDS members of the Commission than others. This FFA proposal for revision to Regulation 3.5 of the Financial Regulations to enable financial support by the Commission for two representatives from each developing State Members to the Convention to each meeting of the Commission and to meetings of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission will not only enable more equitable participation by all members of the Commission in its work, but should also enhance prospects for co-operation and success across the broad spectrum of the Commission's work. FFA members look forward to hearing the views of others on this proposal, and welcome any enquiries, which should be directed to the FFA Secretariat (pamela.maru@ffa.int).

Yours sincerely

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Chair
Forum Fisheries Committee