



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
TWELFTH REGULAR SESSION**

Bali, Indonesia  
3-11 August 2016

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**REPORT OF JAPAN TRUST FUND  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
5 August 2016**

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**WCPFC-SC9-2016/ RP-JTF-02  
Rev 1 (9 August 2016)**

**SECRETARIAT**

## Introduction

The Steering Committee (SC) meeting of the Japan Trust Fund (JTF) was held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016, in the margins of the Twelfth Scientific Committee (SC12). The meeting was chaired and convened by the WCPFC Executive Director, Feleti Teo, with support from JTF Coordinator, Yujiro Akatsuka, JTF Administrator Tony Beeching, Pamela Maru of the Fisheries Forum Agency (FFA) and Dr John Hampton from the SPC-OFP. Other participants include:

Fiji	Netani Tavaga, Aisake Batibasaga
FSM	Naiten Bradley Phillip Jr Derek Pelep
Samoa	Ueta Junior Faasili
SPC	Peter Williams
Tonga	Matini U. Finau, Siolaa Malimali
Vanuatu	Christopher Arthur Lucy Andrea Joy
WCPFC Secretariat	Aaron Nighswander

This was the fifth SC meeting in support of the second phase of JTF funding, which has a greater emphasis on monitoring and compliance than the first phase. Funding is approved for the 5 years of the project, but there is competition for each annual budget. Total funding available for 2016 amounted to USD \$140,553.75, which was all allocated and disbursed in support of five projects.

### 1) Review of the project performance

With just two exceptions [see footnotes 1 and 2], project status/completion reports were presented from recipients of:

- 4 of the 5 current 2016 projects (Fiji, Niue, SPC (in support of developing states) and Tonga (x2)); and
- 3 carried over projects from 2014 (FFA, Samoa and SPC); and
- 3 projects carried over from 2015 (FSM, Nauru<sup>1</sup>, SPC (x2)).

Grant recipients, the Steering Committee and the WCPFC Secretariat expressed appreciation to Japan, the Japan Trust Fund and the JTF Coordinator for their generous support and assistance in strengthening the capacity of developing states. Noting that this is the last year of the current phase of JTF funding, and recognizing the utility of this trust fund's support to SIDs in their efforts to meet their obligations to the WCPFC, there was a strong message from those present, exhorting Japan to consider the possibility of a supporting third phase

The Steering Committee's role is to review the performance of projects and discuss with the view to resolve any project implementation issues and to share experiences in the implementation of projects and learn from those experiences.

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<sup>1</sup> Nauru are aware of the need to prepare advice on the status of their JTF project, ideally this will be provided during the SC meeting allowing update of this report.

Three project issues were raised:

1. **Fiji:** Noting that a destructive cyclone in the first part of the year led the government of Fiji to reassign all fisheries budgets to support relief measures and that subsequently a new accounting system has been established, the JTF project has not yet commenced. Detailing some technical/logistical difficulties in conducting the project as currently proposed it was **requested that a revised proposal be submitted with the same overall objectives, but with an extension to allow sufficient time to prepare staff for the project.**
2. **Tonga:** Two projects are supported in Tonga through JTF funding.
  - Project #4 Observer Training: Attendance at a Sub-regional observer training course was completed and all 8 observers passed. Debriefing course fees were included under this project however only one place was available and hence there are unspent funds. **Tonga requests a revision of the proposal to utilise the funds for observers to attend a long-liner observer training course**, noting that this will not affect the budget allocated by JTF.
  - Project #5 Port Sampling and Data Entry. The project is running very well and work continues to improve under the project. During the first 6 months there was 100% coverage. Five domestic vessels, each with 4 to 5 trips per month, plus foreign fishing vessels are all covered by the port sampling.
3. **Samoa:** Samoa encountered some unexpected delays in gathering samples in support of their 2014 project with consequent delays. Sampling was extended into 2015. Samoa apologised for further delays which were partly due to freezing of access to the funds by the Ministry of Finance whilst an internal investigation was underway. The freeze has been lifted. Currently extended into 2016, **JTF has been approached for a further extension into 2017 which is under consideration by the JTF.**

The Japan Trust Fund Coordinator expressed sympathy to Fiji, and recognizing the delivery challenges for the three projects above, requested the project managers to submit by email formal requests with revised proposals, and a decision would be made following consultation with JTF in Japan.

## **2) Other Issues**

It was announced at the SC that Japan has agreed to extend the current second phase of the JTF for an additional year, 2017. There will be a call for proposals towards the end of this year. The SC was also advised of the possibility of 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of the JTF which is currently under consideration in Japan.