



Paragraph 1 of Article 29 of the **Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean** provides that:

"The Commission shall publish an annual report, which shall include details of decisions taken by the Commission to achieve the objective of this Convention. The report shall also provide information on



The report of the 9th Scientific Committee¹ was presented to COMM10, and the SC Chairperson reviewed progress against the 2021 SC multi-annual workplan, summarised the SC9 recommendations for the Commission, and introduced a proposed 2022 SC multi-annual workplan. The SC Chairperson noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic an in-person meeting was not possible and so SC9 was held remotely consisting of two 3-hour sessions per day. Similarly, the 3 SC workshops and 13 SC web meetings that were held intersessionally prior to SC9 were all held remotely.

The Commission accepted and endorsed the SC9 Report, and the Commission commended the Chairperson of the SC, the Vice-Chairperson of the SC, and Members of the SC for their excellent work. The Commission also amended and adopted a new SC multi



Paragraph 119d

The objective of CMM 03a-2021 (Deepwater species) is, *“through the application of the precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, to ensure the long-*



Paragraph 129d

In addition to SPRFMOs annual cycle of assessment of Member compliance, CMM 03-2022 (Bottom Fishing) establishes mechanisms



2020 VME encounter and reopening that area; and the encounter review process.

Paragraph 179

In October 2020 Australia and New Zealand jointly presented a cumulative Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment for their bottom fishing activities in the SPRFMO Area. An addendum to this assessment was added in 2021. The joint assessment builds on information contained in earlier assessments and is consistent with the SPRFMO BFIAS (which itself was developed to be consistent with the UNGA resolutions and the FAO deep-sea guidelines).

Paragraph 180a

Since the adoption of the first interim SPRFMO Bottom Fishery Impact Assessment Standard (BFIAS) in 2011 by the 10th meeting of the Science Working Group in Vanuatu, the subject of significant adverse impacts of fishing gears on VMEs has received further attention and scientific investigation in both SPRFMO and the wider community. In response to the UNGA Resolutions and the implementation of the FAO Deep-sea Fisheries Guidelines, SPRFMO has adopted a spatial management approach through CMM 03 (Bottom Fishing) that seeks to protect potential VME habitat across large areas of the South Pacific Ocean while still allowing for sustainable and profitable fisheries to occur. This approach is complemented by precautionary measures to protect potential VME habitats within areas that are open to fishing (i.e. an encounter protocol with VME indicator taxa thresholds, move-on rules and review of benthic bycatch), and also requires scientifically-based assessments of cumulative impacts of past and proposed bottom fishing. This BFIAS and resulting bottom fishing impact assessments form part of a suite of measures aimed at promoting sustainable and profitable fisheries that minimise harm to the marine ecosystem.

Paragraph 180b

All proposals to undertake bottom fishing in the SPRFMO Area shall be subject to an assessment process. Any such assessment process shall be based on the best available scientific information and taking into account the history of bottom fishing in the areas proposed and cumulative impacts of past and proposed fishing. The assessment will determine if such fishing would contribute to having significant adverse impacts on VMEs, and to ensure that if it is determined that this fishing would make such contributions, that they are managed to prevent such impacts or not authorised to proceed.

Bottom fishing assessments are to be submitted to the Scientific Committee and Commission at least every 3 years, and also when a substantial change in the fishery has occurred such that it is likely that the risk or impact of the fishery may have changed



Paragraph 183

Since 2019, the SPRFMO SC has reviewed exploratory assessments for lobster, deepwater crab and toothfish, stock assessments for orange roughy (4 stocks), and ecological risk assessments for deepwater chondrichthyans and other teleosts caught in SPRFMO bottom fisheries. The resulting SC recommendations have been considered by the SPRFMO Commission and used to update the relevant CMMs (including by the adoption of science based TACs).

Paragraph 184

Concerned about the impact of Abandoned, Lost or Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) and plastic residues in the ocean greatly affecting marine life and the need to facilitate the retrieval of such gear, in 2019 SPRFMO adopted a CMM on Fishing Gear and Marine Plastic Pollution in the SPRFMO Convention Area.

Paragraph 185

In 2019 the SPRFMO SC discussed the FAO report on “Deep-ocean climate change impacts on habitat, fish and fisheries”. As a result, the SC added an ongoing task into its multi-annual workplan to identify key area and management implications of climate change on VMEs and main fisheries in the SPRFMO Area. In addition, during 2023 there are plans to conduct research into climate change impacts of fisheries in Salas y Gomez and Naz(m)-5.5 d2R (S)-6.5 (0.5 (i)1dget 8-9 (s)-7w -26c -0.021 Td{dur)-04n FMI1di i1dip005 Tw(a)11.4 (1) (i8z(m)-5.6 5.84806



4. SPRFMO meetings and working group activities during the previous year

Activity	Format	Date(s)
8 th Meeting of the Compliance and Technical Committee (CTC8)	3 days, virtual	Between 21 January and 1 February 2021
8 th Meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC8)	2 days, virtual	22 and 28 January 2021
9 th Meeting of the SPRFMO Commission (COMM9)	7 days, virtual	26 January to 3 February 2021
Habitat monitoring working group	1 day, virtual	25 May 2021
Scientific Committee web meeting	1 day, virtual	26 May 2021
Scientific Committee web meeting	1 day, virtual	30 June 2021
Squid working group	1 day, virtual	14 July 2021
Habitat monitoring working group	1 day, virtual	15 July 2021
Scientific Committee web meeting	1 day, virtual	28 July 2021

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