

Information Paper 1

Original: English

Meeting Arrangements



MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Chair

The Chair of the SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting (HoF8 is 34th in the SPC fisheries sectoral meeting series following the name change from "Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries") normally rotates alphabetically. At this meeting it is the turn of Pitcairn who have declined the chair, which therefore passes to French Polynesia who have kindly accepted.

It is the task of the Chair to mediate discussion, and to identify points of agreement.

Meeting timing

It is proposed that the meeting plenary sessions will generally be timed as follows

1st Session	8.00-9.30am
Tea break	9.30-10.00am
2nd Session	10.00-12.00 midday
Lunch break	12.00-1.00pm
3rd Session	1.00-2.30pm
Tea break	2.30-3.00pm
4th Session	3.00-5.00pm

There may be some minor variation from day to day.

English/French interpretation will not be available after 5pm, but single-language after-hours sessions are possible.

Social Functions

There will be cocktails in the evening of Monday 4th March and a Barbecue for HoF participants and SPC staff families on Thursday 7th March.

Less formally, the SPC bar next to the Tennis Court, will be opened from 5.00 pm to approximately 9.30 pm on Friday for liquid refreshment.

Catering

Morning and afternoon tea will be provided as well as a light lunch on the deck outside the conference room. Obtaining a restaurant lunch in Noumea can be a long and costly business and we aim to provide enough fuel to avoid you needing to leave the meeting venue during the day.

Interpretation

SPC, like SPREP, has two official languages and we make great efforts to deliver information, both spoken and written, in English as well as French. However, accurate translation of documents takes considerable time, and depends on the documents being available for translation well in advance. On the other hand interpretation of the spoken word can be almost simultaneous, and the interpretation of verbal presentations can fill in most of the gaps left when we do not have the time to translate all written documents.

Because of the need for simultaneous translation whilst people are speaking, plenary sessions must be fairly formal. During plenary sessions it is suggested that the following points be taken into account:-

- All speakers, including questions from the floor, should speak into a microphone, otherwise the interpreters cannot hear them. Several spare microphone seats will be available at the central table, for observers.
- Speakers, and questioners, should wait to be identified by the chairperson before speaking.
- Speakers should speak clearly and not too fast. One of the main problems for the chair will be in reminding speakers to slow down so the interpreters can keep up. This is especially a problem when people are reading from prepared scripts.
- It helps the interpreters if they can be given copies of any papers, overhead, or powerpoint slides that are going to be presented (or even a copy of the speaker's notes) as far ahead of the session as possible. It makes their lives a little easier if notice is given of any changes or additions to a session in advance.

For after-hours, informal, or "breakout" sessions, simultaneous interpretation will not normally be possible.

Documents

Meeting papers are sorted into two categories:

- Working papers: - papers written for the meeting and, concerning the main business of the meeting. These are a priority for translation.
- Information papers: - papers which provide information relevant to the meeting, but which may not necessarily be the direct basis for a talk, or which may just be presented as a summary.

Hard copies will be provided of all working papers which will normally be available in English and French. Information papers will not be printed out or translated but will be available on-line and will also be provided on a flash drive at the end of the meeting. All papers that have been submitted to us in electronic form (and any translations) will also be made immediately available on the SPC website.

If you have a late information paper that you want to submit, please give it to the meeting secretary in the secretariat office (to the right after the main entrance, opposite the door of the bar) to make it available in electronic form. The meeting secretary will make sure that a copy gets to the interpreters, for papers that are to be verbally presented.

The tables outside the meeting room and in the small conference room may also contain some publications and background reading of relevance to the meeting, and poster displays. Recent FAME videos on a range of topics will also be on display during breaks. A photocopier will be freely available if you wish to photocopy material. Meeting participants are also free to use the SPC library facilities (the library is attached to the Conference complex).

Meeting output

As with all SPC sectoral meetings, any formal outputs or recommendations identified by the Chair will be compiled for agreement and clearance by the meeting on the final day. We plan to concentrate attention, as with previous Heads of Fisheries Meetings, on a separate, short, list of carefully-worded meeting outputs. These outputs may be recommendations to the Secretariat, to the Pacific Community

Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations in November, or statements for the benefit of other organisations concerning Pacific Island fisheries sector priorities.

Computers & Presentations

There will be several computers with CD-ROM drives and internet connections available in the small room next to the entrance of the Conference hall for accessing webmail, or word-processing. We encourage everyone to leave us with copies of their presentations and background or information papers on disk, wherever possible.

Wireless network access points are provided in the meeting room providing access to the internet for those who have brought wireless laptops. These wireless connections do not require an “access key”, or a “proxy” to be specified, and should just connect automatically once located by your computer. Power points (French standard electricity sockets) are underneath the second row of tables in the main meeting room. Under no circumstances should non-SPC computers be connected to the SPC network using a LAN cable – please use the wireless access or use the computers provided in the room just outside the Conference room.

A computer-driven projector is available in the conference room, and an overhead projector, but no slide projector. A VHS video and screen will also be available for demonstrations. Please ask to see Phill Hardstaff if you require technical assistance in using these.

Travel & Finance etc

The meeting secretary will endeavour to put you in touch with someone who can solve problems of an administrative nature. For those who are receiving per-diems from SPC (or via SPC from another source), you will be directed to the Accounts office or otherwise looked after. The hotel bills are your own responsibility.

Meeting Procedures

The Terms of Reference for the SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting are attached as an annex.

ANNEX
TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE HEADS OF FISHERIES MEETING

1. These terms of reference are made by the SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting for the guidance of future meetings.
2. The intention of these Terms of Reference is not to be prescriptive, nor to limit the potential scope of discussion by future meetings within the purview of national and territorial fisheries administrations, but to provide a basic framework that will enable continuity between meetings, and define a common understanding of the obligations of the Secretariat and participants:

Purposes of the SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting:

3. The purposes of the SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting are to:
 - a) provide a forum for discussion¹ between SPC members of issues under the purview of national and territorial fisheries² administrations, particularly those issues not subject to discussion in other regional fora;
 - b) provide a bilingual interface for dialogue between Pacific Island countries and territories³ on fisheries issues of common interest;
 - c) provide guidance to SPC fisheries work programmes by generally communicating areas of national and territorial activity, interest, and priority, and specifically commenting on Secretariat plans and activities;
 - d) agree any regional fisheries issues or priorities for conveyance, as necessary, for the attention of other organisations and SPC governing processes.

Convention of the meeting

4. HoF is a meeting of representatives of SPC member country and territory fisheries administrations, but CROP⁴ and other organisations which work on issues of relevance to Pacific Island fisheries administrations are also welcome to contribute expertise and opinions to the discussion.
5. The Secretariat for the Meeting is the SPC FAME Division.
6. The venue for the meeting will normally be SPC Headquarters in New Caledonia, in order to avoid adding the cost of venue-hire and travel of interpreters, translators, and other members of the Secretariat to the cost of the meeting. However, the meeting may be held in any SPC member country or territory if these additional costs are covered.

¹ Although the word “political” is not precisely defined, it should be noted that SPC is constituted as a non-political organisation, and fora may exist in other organisations for such discussions. It should however also be noted that the discussion of issues that some may deem “political” would not infringe on the SPC constitution, provided that no political decision is made by the meeting;

² It should be particularly noted that the “fisheries” sector includes both fisheries and aquaculture;

³ Note: SPC has 11 members (10 from 2005 onwards) that are not Pacific Islands Forum members, and four of these members do not have English as an official language;

⁴ CROP is the Council of (intergovernmental) Regional Organisations in the Pacific and includes the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS);

7. Each meeting will approve its own Chair. The Chair of SPC fisheries meetings has rotated alphabetically between SPC members in series from the first SPC Regional Fisheries Conference in 1952, through 26 Regional Technical Meetings on Fisheries, to the 6th Heads of Fisheries Meeting in 2009 and this rotation will continue to be the norm. However, the rotation may be interrupted if any member offers to provide the venue, and incremental costs, for the meeting. At any venue other than the SPC Secretariat, the host will normally provide the chair.
8. Attendance by national and territorial fisheries representatives at the meeting is entirely voluntary. However, provided budgetary provision is made by the SPC Governing Council either from SPC assessed contributions⁵ or from programme funding or special projects, travel costs or part thereof will be provided to enable the attendance of one representative from each island member country and territory to the meeting. The travel costs of the Chair of the meeting will be additionally funded.
9. The meeting shall be convened on a date that takes into account the convening of other meetings involving SPC member fisheries representatives and minimises inconvenience to the greatest possible number of members⁶.

Operating guidelines

10. Each HoF meeting will agree its own agenda and any presentations to be heard at the meeting. The agenda should be circulated well in advance, including proposals for presentations from other organisations, to allow adequate and reasonable time for feedback by HoF members on the content of the agenda.
11. A basic principle underlying the meeting is to maximise discussion and to minimise the number of agenda items and length of presentations. As a general guideline, individual presentations should each be less than 20 minutes in duration and be clearly relevant to the business of the meeting or the interests of the fisheries sector in the Pacific Islands.
12. Although HoF is a meeting of SPC member fisheries administrations, there is no formal restriction on the presence or speaking rights of any organisation. If any issues do require more restricted discussion, under exceptional circumstances a closed session may be convened by the Chair, or an autonomous subgroup may be convened outside the meeting to report either to HoF or to other processes as appropriate.
13. All discussion within the main HoF meeting shall take place through the Chair.
14. Each SPC member delegation to the Heads of Fisheries meeting will be clearly defined by the SPC Official Contact, and any interventions or statements made on behalf of a member should be clearly seen by the chair to be authorised by the head of that member delegation
15. Working papers will be conveyed to HoF members by internet at least two weeks before the start of the meeting, except in exceptional circumstances such as the need to incorporate material arising from events taking place just before the meeting. All other papers will be made

⁵ It may be noted that current practice of the SPC Governing Council is for funding from SPC assessed contributions to be provided for the convention of designated SPC sectoral meetings every third calendar year.

⁶ In recent years, the traditional date for the meeting has been in February or early March – a date which tries to minimise interference with the other regional fisheries bodies.

available on the meeting website as they arise, and all written papers will be provided to members on arrival at the meeting venue.

Reporting

16. The official report of the meeting will consist of a concise set of outputs, each agreed by a consensus of all representatives present at the meeting. These outputs will encapsulate the decisions and significant conclusions of the meeting, and may be for the benefit of other organisations, the international community, or the general public, as well as for the guidance of SPC. The Outputs of the meeting will be normally agreed as the final act of the meeting, but in unusual circumstances some may be agreed out of session by correspondence.
17. A record of discussion of the meeting, if required by any participant, will be provided in audio format. However, certain sessions of the meeting, particularly round-table discussions by members, may be summarised in writing and circulated after the meeting for comment and correction before any publication or release.
18. The Chair will produce a report on the meeting for the benefit of the SPC Governing Council. This report will normally be confined to issues of interest or relevance to SPC Governing Council processes, including any recommendations to the Council with significant core- or programme-budgetary implications or concerning administrative issues outside the purview of the SPC Director of FAME, and will normally be presented to the Council by the Chair in person.

Out-of-session consultation

19. Although HoF is not a standing committee in the same way as the Forum Fisheries Committee, and although it is necessary for the Secretariat to maintain contact with SPC national and territorial fisheries representatives on a bilateral basis and for collective consultation to occur only during the Heads of Fisheries Meeting, HoF representatives may also need to collectively consult with the Secretariat and with each other from time to time. Modern technology has made regular intercommunication amongst 27 countries and territories relatively affordable, and an email list server⁷ will be maintained at SPC for this purpose.

Amendment

20. These Terms of Reference can be amended by agreement by any future SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting and are also subject to any framework provisions that are agreed by the SPC Governing Council to apply to all SPC Sectoral Meetings (such provisions currently include guidelines for the application of SPC's bilingual policy).

⁷ The address is currently SPC-HOF@lyris.spc.int. This is a closed list and only includes HoF participants and their alternates. An email sent by any member to this address will automatically be copied to all other HoF participants and the Secretariat.