



SC14 Meeting Report

Annex 1: Collated SC Recommendations, Advice, and Requests

(Items that the SC “noted” or “agreed” are in the main body of the report and not repeated here)

Jack Mackerel

- (Para 121) Given the revised assessment, lower than expected catch and strong current and forecasted El Niño, the SC **recommended** a precautionary approach to setting catch levels for 2027. The SC **recommended** a shortlist of CMPs (CMP29, CMP43, CMP45) for the Commission to consider for implementation. Should the Commission adopt one of these CMPs, it may be appropriate to use that MP to set the 2027 catch limit.
- (Para 122) In the case that an MP is not used to set the 2027 catch limit, most Members of the SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - acknowledge the exceptional conditions and uncertainty impacting the present status of the jack mackerel fishery and abandon the application of the Annex K harvest control rule, which would have a very low probability achieving the management objective of B being above B_{MSY} in the short term and medium term (2032).
 - acknowledge that, to meet the management objective for jack mackerel in the medium term (2032) and long term (2036), fishing needs to be restricted to the fishing mortality similar to that of 2026.
 - adopt precautionary catch advice for 2027.
- (Para 123) Most of the SC **recommended** that the Commission set the 2027 TAC at or below an acceptable range spanning status quo fishing mortality or up to 1.25 times that value. This gives 964–1,152 kt.

Deepwater

- (Para 130) The SC **recommended** that innovative techniques be used to analyse orange roughy samples collected from Westpac Bank and adjacent areas of the New Zealand EEZ during the same season, in order to assess the stock structure within these areas.
- (Para 142) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - agree to take a precautionary approach by maintaining the current temporary closure of the Encounter Area; and
 - note that this decision should be reviewed by the SC if further relevant information is received.
- (Para 162) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - endorse the methods, handling, and release guidelines in SC14-DW08_rev1 (Annex 14); and
 - consider further work on reducing chondrichthyan bycatch in bottom fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area, including gear selectivity and modifications.



Squid

- (Para 207) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - request Members that participate, or have participated, in the jumbo flying squid fishery to provide any missing historical catch information, and
 - task the Secretariat with seeking additional historical catch information from Japan to complete and validate the dataset.
- (Para 209) The SC **recommended** that the Commission request Members to provide standardized CPUE abundance indices, where available, together with the relevant technical information.
- (Para 212) The SC **recommended** that the Commission request Members to provide the Secretariat with metadata describing such available information.
- (Para 228) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - endorse the updated Terms of Reference for the ASTT (Annex 17); and
 - extend the ASTT for another year.

Ecosystems

- (Para 244) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - authorise the use of relevant data held by SPRFMO for ecosystem-related scientific analyses, including the development and evaluation of regional species distribution models (SDMs), subject to applicable data access, confidentiality and attribution requirements.

Exploratory Fisheries

- (Para 263) The SC **advised** the Commission that Australia's proposal for exploratory toothfish fishing on the Macquarie Ridge during 2027–2029 is acceptable in terms of Convention Articles 2 and 22, CMM 13-2024 (Exploratory Fisheries), CMM 03-2025 (Bottom Fisheries), and the Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment Standard (BFIAS).
- (Para 269) The SC **advised** the Commission that the Cook Islands proposal for an exploratory trap fishery for crabs and lobsters in the Northern and Foundation Seamounts is acceptable in terms of Convention Articles 2 and 22, CMM 13-2024 (Exploratory Fisheries), CMM 03-2025 (Bottom Fisheries) and the Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment Standard (BFIAS).
- (Para 274) The SC **advised** the Commission that the Cook Islands proposal for an exploratory Hapuka fishery in the Northern and Foundation Seamounts is acceptable in terms of Convention Articles 2 and 22, CMM 13-2024 (Exploratory Fisheries), CM 03-2025 (Bottom Fisheries), and the Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment Standard (BFIAS).
- (Para 279) The SC **advised** the Commission that the EU's proposal for an exploratory demersal longline fishery for toothfish in the George V Fracture Zone is acceptable in terms of Convention Articles 2 and 22, CMM 13-2024 (Exploratory Fisheries), CMM 03-2025 (Bottom Fisheries) and the Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment Standard (BFIAS).
- (Para 281) The SC discussed the interpretation of the 10-year limit on exploratory fisheries outlined in CMM 13-2024 and **recommended** to the Commission that this be interpreted as 10 years where fishing occurs and data are collected, which do not necessarily have to be consecutive.
- (Para 282) Based on the outcomes of the Toothfish workshop, the SC:



- **Recommended** to the Commission:
 - that SPRFMO should consider adopting a formal decision-making process for setting toothfish catch limits. This system should allow precautionary catch limits where information is low and increase catch limits as more information is available.

Climate change

- None.

Salas y Gómez and Nazca Ridge Area

- (Para 305) Given the multiple criteria met regarding benthic habitats within the SGN area, including occurrence of vulnerable marine ecosystems, their vulnerability to disturbance, and their ecological importance (criteria 1.a, 1.b, 2.a, 2.b, 3.1, 3.b, 4.a, 5.a, 7.b), and given that bottom trawling and midwater trawling targeting benthic-pelagic species (e.g., alfonsino) are not currently permitted within the SGN area, the SC **recommended** that:
 - SPRFMO not authorise bottom and midwater trawling (as defined in para 2.a and para 2.b of CMM 03-2025, respectively) to fish in the SGN area until measures for the area are established.
- (Para 306) Given that other bottom-contact fishing activities (e.g., bottom longlining, potting) could present a risk of disturbance to those benthic habitats, and noting that the level of risk to benthic habitats from bottom longline and trap fisheries is yet to be fully evaluated in the SGN area, the SC **recommended** that:
 - SPRFMO not authorise other new bottom-contact fishing methods to fish in the SGN area, with the exception of existing Cook Islands exploratory fisheries (CMM 14b-2024 and CMM 14g-2024), including any possible renewals of these Cook Islands exploratory fisheries or their possible progression to established fisheries.
- (Para 308) The SC **recommended** that the Commission consider at its next meeting and endorse the SC's recommendations for the SGN area.
- (Para 309) Given that additional data collection and reporting of bycatch information within the SGN area could improve the assessment of current and future fishing impacts in the area, the SC **recommended** that the Commission task the SC to periodically evaluate the monitoring information to assess the effectiveness of any measures developed for the SGN area and to inform future scientific advice to the Commission.
- (Para 310) The SC **recommended** that the Commission endorse the updated Terms of Reference for the SGNTT (Annex 22).



Other matters

- (Para 316) The SC **recommended** the Commission:
 - adopt the Consolidated Guidelines for the Work of the SPRFMO SC in SC14-WP09 (Annex 8), which will supersede the Guidelines for the Work and Structure of the Scientific Committee (2024); Scientific Committee Guidelines for Annual Reports (2019); and Scientific Committee Protocol for Papers to be submitted to the SC (2019).
 - remove the limit on the period of the mandates of the SC's Task Teams.
- (Para 322) The SC **requested** that the Commission consider the prioritisation and appropriate timelines for items related to jack mackerel assessment and MSE in the SC Multi-Annual Workplan.
- (Para 326) The SC **requested** that the Commission provide guidance on the division of roles and responsibilities between the DWG and the SC in relation to data standards.
- (Para 328) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - consider, amend as appropriate, and adopt the SC Multi-Annual Workplan for 2027–2029 (Annex 7).
 - encourage Members to fully participate in the activities of the SC.
- (Para 344) The SC **recommended** that the Commission:
 - note the potential need to reduce the duration of the period between the SC and the Commission, so as to increase the SC's effective intersessional period.
 - consider revising the timing of the annual SC meeting.
- (Para 347) The SC **recommended** that the Commission endorse the holding of three days of pre-SC preparatory sessions for SC15 and potentially in other years as well, depending on the SC's technical workload and tasks and the ability to find a timing that accommodates Members' needs.
- (Para 348) The SC thanked China and Vanuatu for their voluntary contributions for hiring a professional rapporteur for SC14, noted that this reduced the burden on Members during the meeting and improved the efficiency of the report drafting and adoption process, and **recommended** that the Commission adopt a recurring budget item for hiring a professional rapporteur for future meetings of the SC.