



COMMISSION
Twentieth Regular Session
4-8 December 2023
Rarotonga, Cook Islands (Hybrid)

Request for Observer Status from an Intergovernmental Organisation

WCPFC20-2023-03
25 October 2023

Prepared by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide information to the Commission to support its consideration of a request from an intergovernmental organisation to participate as an observer to the WCPFC. This request is placed at the front of WCPFC20's agenda to enable the requesting observer to participate in WCPFC20's proceedings from the start, should the Commission agree to invite the intergovernmental organisation to participate in the work of the Commission as an observer.

Background

2. The Secretariat received a request for observer status from the Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), an intergovernmental organisation that was established to coordinate the definition, implementation and monitoring of policies, strategies and projects leading to the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in its Member States.
3. Article 21 of the Convention provides that representatives from intergovernmental organisations concerned with matters relevant to the implementation of the Convention should be afforded the opportunity to participate in the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies as observers as provided in the rules of procedure of the Commission. Rule 36(1)(e) of the WCPFC Rules of Procedure states:
"The following may participate in the work of the Commission and subsidiary bodies at the invitation of the Commission:
(e) ... other relevant intergovernmental organisations ... invited by the Commission."
4. The Commission Chair notified CCMs of the request from OSPESCA on 5 October 2023 in Circular 2023/83. The Circular and the request are attached for reference.

Recommendation

5. The Commission is invited to consider the request from OSPESCA for observer status to the 20th Regular Session of the WCPFC and make a decision at the start of WCPFC20 to enable the requesting organisation to plan accordingly.



**TO ALL COMMISSION MEMBERS, COOPERATING NON-MEMBERS AND
PARTICIPATING TERRITORIES**

**Circular No.: 2023/83
Date: 5 October 2023
No. pages: 03**

**Observer Request by the Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the
Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA)**

Dear All,

I wish to advise that the Secretariat has received a request for observer status from the Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA). I attach the letter dated 27 September 2023. In accordance with rule 36(1)(e) of the WCPFC Rules of Procedure, as a relevant intergovernmental organization the OSPESCA may participate in the work of the Commission and subsidiary bodies at the invitation of the Commission. In order to progress this request, I suggest that this matter is taken up at the beginning of WCPFC20 and unless there are any objections, we will invite the OSPESCA to participate in that meeting.

Best regards,



**Dr Josie Tamate
WCPFC Chair**

San Salvador, September 27, 2023.
SG OSP 079-2023

Doctor
Rhea Moss-Christian
Director
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.
Federated States of Micronesia

Ref.: Presenting OSPESCA and Request of authorization to attend WCPFC. Annual meeting as an IGO

Distinguished Director:

I am pleased to address you on the occasion of formally presenting the Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), a specialized intergovernmental entity attached to the General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SICA), created in 1995 to coordinate the definition, implementation and monitoring of policies, strategies and projects leading to the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in its Member States: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic, all developing States.

OSPESCA is part of the Network of Secretariats of Fisheries Bodies established under the auspices of the FAO as a regional advisory body on fisheries.

Guided by the current Integration Policy, in addition to its Code of Ethics for Responsible Fisheries and Aquaculture, OSPESCA Member States have promoted eleven (11) binding regulations that include the proper use of sea turtle excluder devices, the Whale Shark, Regulation to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU fishing, the Integrated System of the Central American Aquaculture Fishing Registry, the Regional System for Satellite Monitoring and Control of Fishing Vessels, the regional prohibition of shark finning as well as the establishment of a simultaneous regional close season on the capture of the Caribbean spiny lobster.

In 2013 OSPESCA was awarded with the Margarita Lizarraga medal from the FAO, in recognition of its significant contribution to the sustainable development fisheries and aquaculture in the Central American countries and is considered a model intergovernmental organization, emulated in other regions for the catalytic effect of its achievements.

Currently, OSPESCA participates as an IGO in IATTC and ICCAT, while also engages in collaboration with several international organizations in which, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture strategies, OSPESCA's Sharks and Highly Migratory Species Group, made up of scientists and managers from our member States, permanently evaluates the regional management

Esta instancia regional pertenece al Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana

of fisheries related to these resources and promotes the analysis, management, compliance, and evaluation of the regulations decided in the regional fisheries management bodies, as is the case of WCPFC. The result of this work is valued by our MS to improve the national capacities and performance.

Given that the purposes of OSPESCA coincide with the specially recognized management of WCPFC, and the potential of our organization to support our member States in the compliance with the CCMs of the RFMOs, we wish to express our interest in participating as an observer, as an Intergovernmental Organization in WCPFC meetings, in accordance with its rules and procedures, with a view to the continued strengthening of our institutions and the purposes of Responsible Fishing. For this reason, we very politely request the WCPFC's consent for our participation, which will be effective as soon as the corresponding decision is communicated to us.

I take this opportunity to renew to you the expression of my highest consideration and respect.

Respectfully yours.


José Infante
Regional Director
SICA/OSPESCA

