



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
THIRTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

**Rarotonga, Cook Islands
9 – 17 August 2017**

**REPORT OF THE JAPAN TRUST FUND STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
11 August 2017**

WCPFC-SC13-2017/ RP-JTF-02

SECRETARIAT

Introduction

The Steering Committee (SC) meeting of the Japan Trust Fund (JTF) was held on Friday 11th August 2017, in the margins of the Thirteenth Scientific Committee (SC13). The meeting was chaired and convened by the WCPFC Executive Director, Feleti Teo, with support from Japan, Takahiro Fujiwara, JTF Administrator Tony Beeching and the project selection committee was represented by Pamela Maru of the Fisheries Forum Agency (FFA).

The initial 5 years of the second phase of the JTF ended in 2016. However, Japan extended the second phase project for one year for 2017 with a greater emphasis on monitoring and compliance than the first phase. Total funding available for 2017 projects amounted to USD128,843.25, which was all allocated and disbursed in support of four projects.

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.

Review of project performance

The Steering Committee received update of the status of implementation of each of the project supported by the JTF. The updates as follow:

2017 Projects

Cook Islands: Development of a national MCS strategy for Cook Islands Offshore Fisheries

The project is on course; the terms of reference for the project are agreed and the next step is to undertake a gap analysis.

Kiribati: Meeting the WCPFC Reporting Requirements

Although the funds have been disbursed to the Kiribati Government Central Fund, the funds have not been allocated to the government ministry responsible for implementing the project. Hence there has been no progress in relation to this project. The WCPFC Finance and Administration Manager, Aaron Nighswander will liaise with Kiribati in the margins of SC13 to confirm the disbursement of the funds to Kiribati.

Tonga (x2): 1. Port sampling and data entry.

This is routine work maintained and funded by the JTF throughout the years. Project progressing well and there are no issues to date.

2. Observer Refresher Course for Tonga National Observer Programme.

The refresher course was successfully attended by Tongan observers.

2016 Projects

Fiji: The Fiji Port Monitoring Exercise

The project has had some setbacks – an initial challenge was a destructive typhoon where funds were redirected in the short term for humanitarian reasons, and earlier in 2017 the Fijian government operated an ‘Open Merit Recruitment System’ process; which repositioned staff positions. However, the staffing situation has stabilized, and it is anticipated that project officers will be appointed following SC13.

Niue: Developments of NPOAs for [i] sharks and [ii] IUU fishing.

The bulk of the project work is complete, and the two draft NPOAs have been drafted and shared with stakeholders. There is an internal debate regarding whether the NPOAs may be combined into a single document for submission to Cabinet for adoption.

2015 Projects

FSM: Port sampling data collection review and training: plus a draft IPOA for sharks

FSM has completed this project, which was delayed whilst appropriate expertise was sought to draft the IPOA for sharks. A final report will be submitted following SC13.

Nauru: Capacity building and transfer of technology on at sea boarding and inspection procedures for Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority [NFMRA] vessel operators in Nauru’s Exclusive Economic Zone [EEZ].

The project was delayed whilst awaiting delivery in April 2017 of appropriate trailers for the 2 big multi-purpose boats; the boats are currently undergoing major repairs, following which the project will be implemented.

2014

Samoa: Data Collection Improvement

After several delays related to changes in staff, Samoa wanted to use this opportunity to confirm the completion of the project and thank the Japan Trust Fund.

The Grant recipients, the Steering Committee and the WCPFC Secretariat expressed appreciation to Japan and the Japan Trust Fund for their generous support and assistance in strengthening the capacity of developing states.

2) Other Issues

It was noted that the previous JTF Coordinator, Yujiro Akatsuka-san has taken up a new role and has been replaced by Wataru Tanoue-san, who was unable to attend SC13. Takahiro Fujiwara-san, kindly stepped in to represent the JTF.

The JTF has confirmed a second extension of the Fund to provide support in 2018. WCPFC Circular 2017/55 dated 1 August 2017 calls for proposals requesting support from the JTF in 2018 **to be submitted by 30 September 2017**. Although the deadline is earlier than usual this does not imply that the date of funding availability will change, i.e. April 2018.

Close of Meeting

There being no other matters, the Chair closed the meeting.

Participants

Feleti Teo (Chair)	WCPFC ED	
Takahiro Fujiwara-san	JTF Representative	
Tony Beeching	JTF Administrator	WCPFC Secretariat
Aaron Nighswander		WCPFC Secretariat
Pamela Maru	FFA	Selection Committee
Lara Ainley	Cook Islands	
Leba Dranivesi	Fiji	
Aisake Batibasaga	Fiji	
Bradley Philip	FSM	
Patrick Itara	Kiribati	
Kaon Tiamare	Kiribati	
Brendon Pasisi	Niue	
Lavinia Vaipuna	Tonga	
Siolaa Malimali	Tonga	
Ueta Faasili	Western Samoa	