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**Commission Funding for Developing Countries and SIDS to attend the Northern
Committee Meetings**

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**NORTHERN COMMITTEE
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Committee Meetings**

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Prepared by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to raise the issue of Commission funding support for developing State members of the Commission and Participating Territories to attend meetings of the Northern Committee (NC). This issue requires some discussion and clarification in view of the increased demand for NC funding and the budgetary implications to the Commission.
2. Article 11.7 of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean states that “(a)ny member of the Commission not represented on the committee may send a representative to participate in the deliberations of the committee as an observer. Any extraordinary cost incurred for the work of the committee shall be borne by the members of the committee.”
3. Under Financial Regulation 3.5, “(t)he draft budget shall include an item specifying the costs required to finance the travel and subsistence for one representative from each developing State Party to the Convention and, where appropriate, territories and possessions, to each meeting of the Commission and to meetings of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission.”
4. To date, Commission funding for the NC meetings has been USD10,000 per year since 2008. This amount of funding allows one member of the Secretariat to attend the meeting as well as one or two developing State Party to the Convention and, where appropriate, territories and possessions.
5. In order to remain in budget, priority for funding to attend the Northern Committee has been given to members of the NC who are developing State Party to the Convention and, where appropriate, territories and possessions. Members who are not on the NC but would like to attend the meeting as an observer are currently not funded by the Commission. In light of Article 11.7 of the Convention and Financial Regulation 3.5, clarification is needed on the level of funding that should be provided for the Northern Committee meeting within the Commission’s budget.

Relevant Considerations

6. Article 30(5) of the Convention deals with requirements of developing State members of the Commission. Among other things, the Commission is required to establish a fund to facilitate the effective participation of developing States Parties, particularly small island developing States, and, where appropriate, territories and possessions, in the work of the Commission, including its meetings and those of its subsidiary bodies. To this effect, the financial regulations of the Commission are to include guidelines for the administration of the fund and criteria for eligibility for assistance.

7. Article 30(5) has to be read together with Article 11(7). Under this Article membership of the NC is limited to members of the Commission situated in the area 20 degrees north and those fishing in the area. Other members of the Commission not represented on NC may send representatives to participate in the deliberations of the committee but only as observers. Under Article 11(7) individual members of NC are responsible for the cost of their participation in the NC.

8. An issue for consideration is whether the Trust/Special Funds established under Financial Regulation 5 and 6 pursuant to Article 30 of the Convention allow for the use of the funds to support participation by developing country members in NC meetings as observers.

Recommendations

9. The Committee is invited to consider the issue of funding and source of such funds to support attendance by developing State members and Participating Territories, where appropriate, at NC meetings.