



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Nineteenth Session

Manila, Philippines (Hybrid)

30 November to 5 December 2025

REFRESH TO THE HEADQUARTERS SOLAR POWER SYSTEM

FAC19-2025-08

30 October 2025

Submitted by the Secretariat

Introduction and Purpose

1. This paper seeks approval to allocate funds to replace and upgrade the Secretariat's solar power system at headquarters in Pohnpei. The request builds on the demonstrated financial and environmental benefits of the current system, which has delivered substantial savings since its installation.
2. In 2012, the Commission approved the first solar project for the WCPFC headquarters. Between 2013 and 2020, three phases of installation expanded rooftop capacity to more than 80 kW. As of 2023, the system supplies between 75 and 85 percent of the Secretariat's electricity demand. The project was financed through a mix of Commission budget and donor assistance from the United States. Since installation, cumulative savings have amounted to an estimated USD80,000 – USD90,000 in savings a year in electricity costs.

Rationale for Replacement and Upgrade

3. The current solar system has now operated for more than a decade. While the panels can last up to 25 years in ideal conditions, inverters and other electrical components require replacement or upgrading to maintain efficiency and performance. The current inverters have been refreshed as needed since the initial installation and do not need to be replaced. The proposal is to only replace the existing solar panels. The refresh will safeguard the Commission's investment, ensure continued cost savings, and address potential reliability risks as equipment ages.

Financial Impact

4. The original system paid for itself through realized cost savings in less than four years, and later expansions achieved payback in under three and a half years. Continued operation has cut Secretariat electricity bills by more than three-quarters. Replacement of aging components will protect these savings and extend the life of the solar investment. Replacement of the solar panels will cost USD61,600. These costs are modest compared to the annual savings produced by the solar system.

Environmental Impact

5. The current solar array offsets diesel-based generation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution. Maintaining and upgrading the system will ensure continued contribution to enhanced sustainability. The Secretariat's solar initiative

has also served as a demonstration of renewable energy use in small island contexts, reinforcing the Commission's commitment to environmental responsibility.

Proposal

6. FAC is invited to consider allocation of funds from the remaining unspent 2025 budget to support replacement of solar panels for the headquarters solar system.