- Noumea-based position
- Attractive expatriate package
- Join the principal development organisation in the region

*The Pacific Community (SPC) invites applications for the position of **Senior Research Officer (Sclerochronology)** within its Oceanic Fisheries Programme located at its headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia.*

Description

The **Pacific Community** (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, supporting development since 1947. We are an international development organisation owned and governed by our 27 country and territory members. In pursuit of sustainable development to benefit Pacific people, our unique organisation works across more than 25 sectors. We are known for our knowledge and innovation in such areas as fisheries science, public health surveillance, geoscience, and conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The **Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division** includes the Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) and Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP). The goal of the OFP is to ensure fisheries that exploit the region's resources of tuna, billfish and related species are managed for economic and ecological sustainability using the best available scientific information. In pursuing this goal, the OFP provides scientific support for the management of fisheries for tuna and associated species, with a strong focus on stock assessment and modelling, fisheries and ecosystem monitoring and analysis and data management. The OFP works closely with member countries and territories, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, the Forum Fisheries Agency, the Parties to the Nauru Agreement and other regional and sub-regional entities.

The role – the **Senior Research Officer (Sclerochronology)** will undertake a programme of work that supports the development and application of fisheries science to tuna fisheries in the western and central Pacific Ocean. The role will focus on the collection, preparation and analysis of fish otoliths, other hard parts and other biological samples to support the assessment and management of tuna stocks and associated species in the western and central Pacific Ocean and adjacent areas.

The key responsibilities of the role include the following:

Sclerochronology and biological sample collection, preparation and analyses
- Provide high quality data related to otolith and fish hard part collection, preparation and analysis.
- Develop and adapt sampling and analysis protocols when required.
- Implement good laboratory practices.
- Contribute to routine biological sample collection and other analytical work when required.

Supervision of sclerochronology lab and its maintenance
- Plan, organise, direct and coordinate activities in the sclerochronology laboratory at SPC Headquarters.
- Ensure SPC Health and Safety, Procurement and Staff policies are adhered to.
- Oversee tests and experiments and ensure that all tests and projects are completed on time.
- Manage storage of otoliths and other hard parts associated with the Pacific Marine Specimen Bank.
- Develop quality control protocols for operation of lab equipment.

Data quality and database support
- Enter data in the BioDaSys database.
- Screen, check and correct entered data to ensure high quality.
- Assist with database development, maintenance and improvement.
- Extract data from the database as required.

Communication, reporting and training
- Produce reports as required and articles for newsletters and websites.
- Contribute to the design and writing of scientific papers.
- Train lab assistants, students, trainees and volunteers.
- Participate in and contribute to workshops and training to build capacity for national and regional institutions across the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) to obtain and interpret sclerochronology data.

For a more detailed account of the key responsibilities, please **refer to the online job description**.

Key selection criteria

Qualifications
- Bachelor's degree in marine biology, fisheries science, earth science or a related field.

Technical expertise

- 7 years' experience working with otoliths and/or other fish hard parts, particularly in the context of sample collection, preparation and sectioning for age reading, growth, morphological and chemical analysis.
- Two years' experience in a laboratory supervisory/leadership position.
- Experience of collecting otoliths and other biological samples in the field, and in the lab.
- Proficiency in the use of relational databases (e.g. Microsoft Access, SQL databases).

Language skills
- Well developed technical writing competencies in English.
- Excellent oral communication in skills in English.

Interpersonal skills and cultural awareness
- Proven ability to supervise the tasks of an inter-disciplinary and/or multi-cultural team.
- Knowledge of Pacific Island countries and territories is an advantage.

Salary, terms and conditions

Contract Duration – This vacant position is budgeted until 31 December 2025 and is subject to renewal depending on funding and performance.

Remuneration – the **Senior Research Officer (Sclerochronology)** is a band 9 position in SPC's 2023 salary scale, with a starting salary range of 3,209–3,915 SDR (special drawing rights) per month, which currently converts to approximately XPF 486,099–593,079 (USD 4,300–5,246; EUR 4,074–4,970). An offer of appointment for an initial contract will normally be made in the lower half of this range, with due consideration being given to experience and qualifications. Progression within the salary scale is based on annual performance reviews. SPC salaries are not presently subject to income tax in New Caledonia.
Benefits for international staff employees based in New Caledonia – SPC provides subsidised housing in Noumea. Establishment and repatriation grant, removal expenses, airfares, home leave travel, health and life and disability insurances and education allowances are available for eligible employees and their eligible dependents. Employees are entitled to 25 working days of annual leave per annum and other types of leave, and access to SPC's Provident Fund (contributing 8 % of salary, to which SPC adds a matching contribution).

Languages – SPC's working languages are English and French.

Recruitment principles – SPC's recruitment is based on merit and fairness, and candidates are competing in a selection process that is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory. SPC is an **equal-opportunity employer**, and is committed to cultural and gender diversity, including bilinguism, and will seek to attract and appoint candidates who respect these values. Due attention is given to gender equity and the maintenance of strong representation from Pacific Island professionals. If two interviewed candidates are ranked equal by the selection panel, preference will begiven to the **Pacific Islander**. Applicants will be assured of complete confidentiality in line with SPC's private policy.

Application procedure

Closing date: 12 March 2023 – 11:00 pm (Noumea time)
Job Reference: SH000259

Applicants must apply online at http://careers.spc.int/
Hard copies of applications will not be accepted.
For your application to be considered, you must provide us with:

- an updated resume with contact details for three professional referees
- a cover letter detailing your skills, experience and interest in this position
- responses to all screening questions

Your application will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed at shortlisting stage if all the above documents are not provided.
Applicants should not attach copies of qualifications or letters of reference.
Please ensure your documents are in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format.
SPC does not charge a fee to consider your application and will never ask for your banking or financial information during the recruitment process.

Screening questions (maximum of 2.000 characters per question):
1. Why is information on fish age and growth important for fisheries management, and how can otoliths help?
2. What are otolith 'biochronologies', and how can they be used to understand the impacts of environmental change on fish populations?
3. What can otolith shape and chemical composition tell us about the structure of marine fish populations?