

1st Meeting of the Commission

Tokyo, Japan

3 September 2015

Meeting Report

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Director-General of the Fisheries Agency of Japan, Mr. Kazuo Sato, welcomed participants to the NPFC 1st Meeting of the Commission, which was convened in Tokyo, Japan on 3 September 2015. Mr. William Gibbons-Fly (United States), Chair of the Preparatory Conference (PrepCon), reflected on the achievements of participants and their work to establish the Commission over the past decade. The President of the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Dr. Toshio Takeuchi, expressed his gratitude that the NPFC Secretariat will be hosted by the university, and noted the close alignment between NPFC and university research interests.

2. Membership of the Commission

Korea reported on the status of the Convention. In accordance with Article 25 of the Convention, the Convention entered into force on 19 July 2015, 180 days after Korea received deposit of the fourth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. The first four instruments were received from Canada, China, Japan and Russia. Korea submitted the fifth instrument of ratification on 17 June 2015. On 27 July 2015, the Depositary also received the written instrument from Chinese Taipei as provided in the Annex of the Convention. The United States informed the Commission that it is awaiting the passage of the implementing legislation necessary to ratify the Convention and hopes to complete that process soon. The Republic of Vanuatu informed the Commission that it is committed to ratifying the Convention and hopes to do so before the end of 2015.

3. Appointment of Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur

In accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, Mr. Kenji Kagawa (Japan) was elected to serve as the first Chair of the Commission. Dr. Aleksei Baitaliuk (Russia) was elected to serve as the Vice-Chair. Dr. Janelle Curtis (Canada) was appointed as the meeting Rapporteur.

4. Adoption of Agenda

The draft agenda was adopted without amendments.

5. Approval and Appointment of Executive Secretary

The Commission appointed Dr. Dae-Yeon Moon (Korea) as the first Executive Secretary of NPFC. Dr. Moon expressed his gratitude to the Commission for the opportunity and thanked the other candidates who were interviewed for the position. Mr. Kagawa and Dr. Moon signed the contract for the Appointment of the Executive Secretary which was approved by the Commission (COM1/WP2).

6. Report of the Preparatory Conference of NPFC

The Chair of the PrepCon, Mr. Gibbons-Fly provided a report on the cumulative work of the PrepCon (COM1/WP3: Final Report of the PrepCon). He noted that the PrepCon successfully concluded all of the tasks identified in its workplan (included in paragraph 21 of COM1/WP3), and advanced work on other related areas.

The Commission acknowledged the leadership and work of Mr. Gibbons-Fly and the Interim Secretariat, and recognized that their efforts have contributed to the success of PrepCon and the establishment of the Commission.

a) Adoption of NPFC Rules

The Rules of Procedure (Attachment 3 of COM1/WP3), Financial Regulations (Attachment 4 of COM1/WP3), and Staff Regulations and Grievance Procedure (Attachment 5 of COM1/WP3) were adopted by consensus.

b) Adoption of Agreement regarding Privileges and Immunities of NPFC

The draft Agreement was adopted by consensus (Attachment 7 of COM1/WP3). Japan and the Interim Secretariat were encouraged to establish the new NPFC Secretariat as soon as possible. Russia, taking into account discussions at PrepCon 7, emphasized the importance of providing optimal conditions for the work of the Secretariat.

c) Adoption of NPFC Budget for September 2015- March 2017

The Interim Secretariat provided an explanation for revisions to the draft Budget for Years 1 and 2 (Attachment 6 of COM1/WP3 and COM1/WP4). The Commission adopted the Year 1 Budget (2015-2016) and a fixed annual contribution from Japan of 44,000,000 Yen. While the total amount of expenditures for Year 2 (2016-2017) was approved, certain details on appropriations and expenditures will be discussed and finalized during the next Commission meeting. An initial 50% installment of contributions based on the previous years' formula would be due on 1 April 2016.

7. Recommendations from Scientific Working Group

The Commission discussed recommendations from the SWG (Paragraph 7 of COM1/Ref1), and supported implementation of these recommendations. It was agreed that the NPFC representative to the UN Fish Stock Agreement review meetings should be the Executive Secretary or his delegate. The Commission noted that the Small Scientific Committee (SSC) on Pacific saury should take into consideration the Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific saury (Attachment 9 of COM1/WP3). Commission members also agreed that the Executive Secretary would circulate, based on consultations by correspondence with members, a draft list of priority species for final approval by the Commission in its 2016 meeting.

8. Establishment of Science Committee and Technical Compliance Committee and Chairs and Vice-Chairs

In accordance with Article 6 of the Convention, the Scientific Committee (SC) and Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) have been established. Mr. Joji Morishita (Japan) was appointed as the interim Chair of the SC, and Mr. Gary Miller (Canada) was appointed as the interim Chair of TCC.

9. Adoption of Conservation and Management Measures

Two agreements regarding Conservation and Management Measures were adopted by the Commission: Information Requirements for Vessel Registration (Attachment 8 of COM1/WP3); and the Conservation and Management Measure for Pacific saury (Attachment 9 of COM1/WP3).

10. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

The Commission recognized the importance of ensuring a sufficient amount of time was scheduled between science-related meetings and the meeting of the Commission, and ensuring that these meetings did not overlap with the meetings of other RFMOs. The 1st Meeting of the SC and meetings of SSCs on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems, North Pacific armorhead and Pacific saury will be scheduled for the month of April 2016. The 1st Meeting of the TCC and the 2nd Meeting of the Commission will be held during the week of 22 August 2016. All meetings in 2016 will be held in Tokyo, Japan. The timing and location of 2017 meetings will be determined in 2016.

11. Adoption of the Record of the Meeting

The Record of the 1st meeting of the Commission was adopted at 15:00.

12. Closing Remarks

The report was adopted in its entirety.