



Dr. Dae-Yeon Moon  
Executive Secretary  
F Hakuyo-Hall,  
Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology,  
4-5-7 Konan, Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-8477 JAPAN

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Dear Dr Moon,

On behalf of PICES and ICES, I am pleased to announce that the next international symposium in the revived Small Pelagic Fish Symposium series, titled “*Small Pelagic Fish: New Frontiers in Science for Sustainable Management*”, will be held February 21–24, 2022, at the Galouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Portugal.

Small pelagic fish (SPF) account for more than 30% by weight of the total landings of marine capture fisheries around the world and play an important role in the transfer of energy through mid-trophic levels in marine ecosystems and in global protein security. Oscillations of SPF populations are dramatic and cyclical in response to climate variability on multi-decadal scales. Researchers around the world continue to coordinate efforts to understand the mechanisms linking climate variability to basin-scale teleconnections in the population dynamics of SPF. This international collaboration was initiated by an international symposium titled “*The Expert Consultation to Examine Changes in Abundance and Species Composition of Neritic Fish Resources*” organized in 1983 by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in San José, Costa Rica (FAO Fisheries Report 291, 1983), and was spearheaded by the GLOBEC Regional Program on Small Pelagic Fish and Climate Change (SPACC) from 1994 to 2010 culminated with the publication of its review book. In the most recent decade, ICES and PICES have co-sponsored two symposia on SPF, including “Forage fish interactions: Creating the tools for ecosystem-based management of marine resources” in 2012 (Nantes, France) leading to publication of 12 articles in the *ICES Journal of Marine Science* (2014, Vol. 71, pp. 1–152), and “Drivers of dynamics of small pelagic fish resources” in 2017 (Victoria, Canada) resulting in two special issues in *Deep-Sea Research Part II* (2019, Vol. 159, pp. 1–182; 15 articles) and *Marine Ecology Progress Series* (2019, Vol. 617–618, 1–376; 22 articles). The 2017 symposium re-confirmed the need to meet every 3 to 4 years to discuss, debate and collaborate to further improve the science-based advice required to sustainably manage SPF in an ecosystem context.

Substantial scientific progress continues to be made on understanding the drivers and dynamics of SPF in several ecosystems: different hypotheses of

**Secretariat**

9860 W. Saanich Road, Sidney,  
B.C., Canada, V8L 4B2

Phone: (250) 363-6366

Fax: (250) 363-6827

E-Mail: [secretariat@pices.int](mailto:secretariat@pices.int)

Internet: [www.pices.int](http://www.pices.int)

**Chairman**

Chul Park

**Vice-Chairman**

Enrique N. Curchitser

**Executive Secretary**

Sonia Batten

mechanisms of population dynamics of SPF continue to be tested, data from long-term monitoring and stock-assessment efforts continue to accumulate, numerical modelling approaches continue to advance, technologies, such as genome analysis, continue to rapidly develop, and experience continues to be gained from management decisions and stakeholder involvement. The exchange of information and ideas drawn from comparable populations across the globe are, therefore, particularly insightful as we seek to improve management strategies. The 2022 SPF symposium will highlight the state-of-the-art in these and other topics surrounding the sustainable exploitation of SPF within an ecosystem context, in keeping with the goals of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The symposium will be led by the joint ICES/PICES Working Group on Small Pelagic Fish (WGSPF or WG 43; <https://meetings.pices.int/members/working-groups/wg43>) which has two designated NPFC representatives.

Collaborations between PICES and NPFC were formalized in the 2019 Framework for Enhanced Scientific Collaboration in the North Pacific. The Framework identified stock assessment support as one of the priority areas for cooperation between NPFC and PICES. Among eight NPFC priority species, six are small pelagic species which comprise more than 90% of the total catch in the NPFC Convention Area. The Symposium should therefore have great interest for NPFC, and I hope that you will consider becoming a co-sponsor.

As one of PICES strategic regional partners NPFC has generously supported other PICES joint symposia in recent years, such as the 2017 SPF Symposium and the 2018 Pacific Transitional Areas Symposium. Any support that you can provide would be gratefully received and perhaps we may suggest some possible methods: (1) to provide \$15K to the organizers for the symposium logistics (to be transferred to PICES), (2) to directly support NPFC experts to attend the symposium, and (3) to nominate a NPFC representative to serve on the SSC. We understand that specific financial commitments may not be possible until the NPFC Annual Meeting in early 2021, but hope that the principal decisions could be made earlier.

Your support, combined with contributions from other international and national organizations, agencies and research programs will make this symposium a truly successful and cooperative effort.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sonia Batten". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Sonia Batten