NPFC-2023-SC08-IP11

**Special project for hiring an expert to assist the SWG NPA-SA in conducting an assessment for Splendid Alfonsino and North Pacific Armorhead**

**Background**: The Small Scientific Committee (SSC BF-ME) was established to ensure the long-term sustainable use of the bottom fisheries resources in the Convention Area. Over the past few years, the SSC BF-ME and its subsidiary Small Working Group on North Pacific Armorhead and Splendid Alfonsino (SWG NPA-SA) have reviewed fisheries and research data on NPA and SA and reviewed approaches applicable for stock assessment of target bottom species. The SSC BF-ME plans to assess the status of SA in 2024 and provide management advice to the Commission as well as continue to develop approaches to improve the management of NPA stock. The 4th SSC BF-ME meeting recommended to hire an external expert to support the work of the SWG NPA-SA.

The **purpose** of this project is to hire an expert in the use of data limited methods in stock assessment to assist the SWG NPA-SA in conducting an assessment of the Splendid Alfonsino (SA) and possibly the North Pacific Armorhead (NPA) stocks in the Emperor Seamounts.

**Project Lead**: Dr. Kota Sawada, the SWG NPA-SA Lead

**Commencement and Completion Date**: May – December 2024

**Project Budget Summary**: costs TBD, including

 Consultancy: up to 3-4 weeks

 Travel costs: SSC BF-ME05 meeting

The **Terms of Reference** for the expert will be to:

1. Guide the SWG lead in preparing the appropriate data and models that will allow production of Spawner-per-recruit (SPR) and Yield-per-recruit (YPR) models for SA.
2. Provide code for model fitting, displaying model outputs and specific advice to the SWG lead that can be used to parameterize the SPR and YPR models for SA, as well as to estimate the variability of the model outputs.
3. Assist the SWG in developing these models into management advice for SA.
4. Assist the SWG in developing and applying alternative assessment methods, such as individual based models and depletion estimates for NPA stocks as time allows.