

North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

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State Reception Recognizes Canada's 20th Anniversary of Operation Driftnet

Ottawa Canada, October 28, 2013—Canada's Operation Driftnet patrols began in 1993 after the United Nations imposed a moratorium on large-scale high-seas driftnet fishing and banned the use of nets longer than 2.5 kilometres in length. The same year, the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) was established by the Convention for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks, prohibiting directed fishing for anadromous fish in the waters of the North Pacific Ocean and its adjacent seas. Launching of the Operation Driftnet marked the beginning of the active phase of NPAFC cooperative enforcement activities among its member countries to eliminate illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) Pacific salmon fishing.

In recognition of the 20th Anniversary of Canada's Operation Driftnet, an official reception was hosted by the Government of Canada at the Aviation and Space Museum. Mr. Allan MacLean, Director General of Conservation and Protection, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, welcomed the event participants, introduced the spokespersons, and presented the Operation Driftnet video. Hon. John Duncan, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip and Member of Canadian Parliament (Vancouver Island North); Mr. Norihiro Okuda, Ambassador of Japan; Mr. Trevor Swerdfager, ADM, Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Mr. Stephen Quick, Director General of the Canada Science and Technology Museums Corporation; and Dr. Vladimir Radchenko, NPAFC Executive Director attended the reception and addressed the audience.

The Operation Driftnet video clip displayed significant efforts undertaken by several of Canada's governmental departments to organize and conduct patrol activities in the North Pacific Ocean in collaboration with other NPAFC member countries. More than four million square kilometres are monitored by cooperative efforts every year, with more than 100 days of ship-time, 500 hours of aerial patrols, and employing radar satellite surveillance. Blair Thexton, Fishery Officer of the Canada's Maritime Security Operation Center, presented informative background on the operation's aims, history, evolving tactics, and advanced technical equipment.

A visit to a maritime patrol aircraft outside the museum's hall gave the audience the "touch and feel" of the patrol experience and more opportunity to learn about aerial patrol capabilities. This showcased the capability of the aircraft surveillance display equipment including an infrared camera, which can identify types of vessels and their activities even in complete darkness.

At the conclusion of the reception, attendees toured the museum collection that includes more than fifty historical and contemporary aircraft and helicopters, engines, equipment, and crew uniforms.

Special tours will be hosted for schoolchildren all week to increase their understanding of these important efforts to protect fisheries resources.



Group of speakers in the Operation Driftnet Anniversary Event venue (Courtesy of Fisheries and Oceans Canada).

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