

North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

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For Immediate Release
September 12, 2014
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(559 words + two figures)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, TRANSPARENCY, AND INCREASED PUBLIC AWARENESS KEY TO CONFRONTING IUU FISHING AND SEAFOOD FRAUD

Seattle, Washington, (August 20, 2014)–The U.S. Presidential Task Force on IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) fishing and seafood fraud met in a public meeting in Seattle, Washington, on August 20, 2014, where several organizations, including the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) presented their ideas for confronting these challenges.

The NPAFC, which has a 22-year record of international cooperation in successfully reducing illegal fishing on the high seas of the North Pacific, “demonstrates how beneficial international cooperation can be in deterring IUU fishing, and how collaboration in the frame of a regional fisheries management organization allows for involvement of non-member states or entities in enforcement and preventive activities,” said Vladimir Radchenko, Executive Director of the organization.

Radchenko also testified that “internationally agreed instruments of law related to international trade can be useful to deter IUU fishing”. In addition, he pointed out that “efforts to deter IUU fishing are frustrated by a lack of transparency in major seafood markets,” and that “raising awareness and educating the general public is very important for success in combating IUU fishing”.

Valuable input and expertise from key stakeholders and interest groups notably advanced the activities of the Task Force. Other spokespersons supported the President’s initiative including ideas for providing economic opportunity for legitimate fishermen, supporting profitability for legally caught seafood, stopping illegal trafficking operations, and ensuring seafood is legally caught.

Other speakers emphasized the value of having a single definition of IUU fishing and to use it consistently, including in international agreements. Regional fisheries management organizations responsible for areas where IUU fishing is prevalent are important in determining the approaches and resources necessary to enhance fisheries enforcement and management infrastructure.

With the main objective of promoting the conservation of anadromous stocks in the North Pacific Ocean, the NPAFC undertakes continuing and increasing efforts to eliminate fishing for salmon and steelhead in the North Pacific outside of national waters. More than four million square kilometers of the North Pacific Ocean are monitored by NPAFC member countries each year. In 2013, 109 days of surface asset deployments, 493 hours of aerial patrols, and satellite surveillance efforts were coordinated among Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States.

Persistence of IUU fishing in the high seas remains one of the biggest challenges for anadromous stock conservation. To face this challenge, NPAFC strives to strengthen relationships with other organizations by facilitating the exchange of experiences and ideas such that enforcement plans reflect the requirements of long-term global perspectives.

On June 17, 2014, the U.S. President Obama released a [Presidential Memorandum](#) entitled “*Establishing a Comprehensive Framework to Combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and Seafood Fraud*”. The Memorandum expressed deep concern over the threat that IUU-fishing continues to pose to economic and environmental sustainability of fisheries and fish stocks, both in the United States and around the world. It established a Presidential Task Force, co-chaired by the U.S. Departments of State and Commerce and made up of a broad range of other U.S. federal agencies.

Over the next several weeks, a comprehensive report to the U.S. President will be prepared that summarizes recommendations for implementation of a comprehensive framework to combat IUU fishing and seafood fraud.

The full text of the NPAFC statements and other comments are available at Regulations.gov (<http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0090>).



United States Coast Guard and China Coast Guard vessels rendezvous and transfer custody of the *Yin Yuan*, a fishing vessel sighted in international waters of the North Pacific and suspected of serious fisheries violations, including high seas driftnetting. The vessel was detected by a Canadian patrol aircraft operating from a base in Japan with Canadian and Japanese fisheries enforcement officials aboard the flight. Photo credits: United States Coast Guard.

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About NPAFC

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of Pacific salmon (sockeye, chum, pink, coho, Chinook, and cherry salmon) and steelhead trout in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas, and serves as a venue for cooperation in and coordination of scientific research and enforcement activities. The NPAFC Convention Area is located in international waters north of 33°N latitude in the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and the Sea of Okhotsk. NPAFC member countries are Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States of America.
