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# North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting – 2015  
Kobe, Japan  
2015 May 11-15

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PACIFIC SALMON HIGH SEAS RESEARCH REVIEWED AT INTERNATIONAL MEETING**

*Kobe, Japan (May 15, 2015)*—International scientific experts of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) member countries (Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia, and United States) have completed a five day meeting in Kobe, Japan, to review current information related to salmon abundance and biology at the Commission's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting.

Scientists from NPAFC member countries presented salmon catch and hatchery statistics, planned, reviewed, and coordinated exchanges of scientific data and samples, and assessed scientific studies of Pacific salmon and steelhead in international waters and adjacent areas of the North Pacific.

Salmon research cruise plans for 2015 were also discussed. These include surveys in the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, Northwest Pacific and Okhotsk Sea. Research cruises employ survey vessels from a variety of sources including government, university, and chartered fishing boats. Salmon survey objectives vary by season and location, and include migration timing, abundance and distribution, marine ecology, run size forecasting, stock identification, and salmon growth and body condition.

Studies exploring the relationship between abundance of salmon and biophysical parameters that influence their habitat use, marine growth, and prey fields were presented. Researchers also continue to examine oceanic properties at and below the surface in hope of discovering an index that will indicate where Pacific salmon are found, and where they are not found. Thus far, analyses have shown there is no single oceanographic variable that provides enough information to predict salmon distribution with certainty.

Scientific investigators also reviewed the ways to improve estimates of the abundance of hatchery and wild salmon across the Pacific Rim with the objective of making this information available for improved salmon management.

Other experts shared information on next generation DNA sequencing methodologies. These techniques now enable the genetic sequencing of massive amounts of DNA at low cost, which will make its use for the genetic analysis of Pacific salmon more common. Increasing results from these new genetic methods will contribute significantly to analyses of stock identification of salmon in catches for fisheries management and for studies of fish distribution.

Immediately following the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, NPAFC will be hosting a three-day international symposium on *Pacific Salmon and Steelhead Production in a Changing Climate: Past, Present, and Future* also in Kobe, Japan. This symposium will review recent research on ecological mechanisms regulating marine distribution and production of anadromous populations, climate change impacts on salmon, retrospective analysis of key populations as indicators of conditions in North Pacific marine ecosystems, and implications of stock identification and model development for the management of salmon and steelhead. The objective of the symposium is to utilize the best available information on

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marine ecology of salmonid populations to explain and forecast annual variation in their production. The program includes 89 presentations by international experts representing all the member countries of NPAFC. The symposium proceedings will be peer-reviewed and published in the NPAFC Bulletin series, which will be freely available on the NPAFC website when completed.

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### **About NPAFC**

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of salmon (chum, coho, pink, sockeye, 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 include Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and United States of America.

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