
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

23rd Annual Meeting – 2015
Kobe, Japan
2015 May 11-15

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS IN COMBATING IUU FISHING IN THE NORTH PACIFIC

Kobe, Japan (May 15, 2015)—Fisheries enforcement agencies of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) member countries (Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia, and United States) reported on successful 2014 efforts in combating IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing on the high seas of the North Pacific at the Commission’s Annual Meeting.

IUU fishing continues to threaten the conservation and sustainability of North Pacific salmon resources. NPAFC member countries have developed a well-coordinated surveillance and enforcement regime and work to reduce and eliminate this threat. This high level of coordination is epitomized by the exchange of information and the presence of personnel participating aboard one another’s patrol platforms.

Patrol by Canadian and United States fisheries enforcement aircraft from air bases in Japan help maximize patrol duration and range. Facilitated coordination between Canadian flights and United States Coast Guard (USCG) patrol vessels was achieved by the assignment of Canadian fishery enforcement officers to the USCG District 17 office. Canadian aircraft flew with two Fisheries Agency of Japan (FAJ) fisheries inspectors aboard the aircraft. Japan Coast Guard air patrols were conducted with a USCG observer aboard to support coordination with surface ship patrols. And in a bilateral arrangement, the USCG hosted People’s Republic of China (PRC) Coast Guard (CCG) law enforcement officers aboard the USCG *Morganthau* to increase the effectiveness of ship patrols.

The combined multilateral efforts in 2014 resulted in significant enforcement actions. Two suspicious vessels sighted by U.S Coast Guard air reconnaissance appeared to be rigged for transshipment activities. Based on these observations, INTERPOL released a Purple Notice to alert international enforcement authorities to suspected IUU transshipment activity by one of those vessels. The notification alerted the Republic of Korea who conducted a port state inspection of the suspected vessels when they arrived in their port. Inspections indicated the legitimacy of the vessels was suspect. Later, one of these vessels was detained in Russia for not having a valid fishing license.

In another case, a suspected high seas drift net (HSDN) vessel, *Yin Yuan*, was encountered by a Canadian CP-130 aircraft during its patrol with two FAJ inspectors aboard. The *Yin Yuan* flew a Japanese flag, but the Japanese inspectors confirmed it was not a Japanese vessel. *Yin Yuan* immediately removed the Japan flag upon being sighted by the Canadian patrol aircraft. Information about the *Yin Yuan* was provided to the USCG Cutter *Morganthau*, which was later able to locate the fishing vessel. This time the master responded that the vessel was Chinese. When a boarding party comprising the USCG and CCG fishery enforcement officers aboard the *Morganthau* gained access to the *Yin Yuan*, the master admitted the net tube, net spreader, and 3.3 km of driftnet had been dumped over the side during the night. Upon investigation, half a ton of net-scarred salmon was discovered in the ship’s freezer. Arrangements were made with the CCG for the *Morganthau* to escort the *Yin Yuan* to a rendezvous point in the East China Sea where custody of the fishing boat was transferred to a CCG patrol vessel for investigation and prosecution. The Chinese law enforcement officers aboard the *Morganthau* were instrumental in the successful interdiction, seizure, escort, and transfer of the *Yin Yuan* to Chinese authorities.

After the Chinese legal process, the remaining fishing gear of the *Yin Yuan* was confiscated and the master was fined the maximum permitted in the circumstances (100,000 RMB approximately 16,300 USD). The salmon was seized and discarded as it was deemed unfit for human consumption. The Chinese government is currently pursuing further enforcement investigations against the ship's owner.

Each NPAFC-member country is dedicated to the elimination of IUU fishing and illegal transshipment of fish at sea and in port. To this end, all the member countries met in the spring to carefully plan and coordinate their aircraft and ship patrol schedules to maximize coverage of the North Pacific.

Multilateral cooperative enforcement operations, regular information exchanges between NPAFC-member enforcement agencies, and a consistent enforcement presence in the North Pacific all act as effective deterrents against IUU fishing activities. Such joint international commitments by governments show a path to success in efforts to detect, interdict, and prosecute vessels involved in IUU fishing. Our continued vigilance is crucial to the ongoing effort to curtail the large-scale high seas driftnet threat, and a requirement for sustainable fisheries management and conservation of salmon in the North Pacific.

-END-

Contact: Vladimir Radchenko
NPAFC Executive Director
Phone: +1-604-775-5550
Email: secretariat@npafc.org
Website www.npafc.org

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 the United States of America.



The NPAFC Convention Area is located in international waters north of 33°N in the North Pacific, Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk.
