
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION WORKS TO OPPOSE IUU FISHING IN THE NORTH PACIFIC

Busan, Republic of Korea (May 20, 2016)—Fisheries enforcement agencies of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) member countries (Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia, and United States) reported on successful 2015 efforts in combating IUU (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing on the high seas of the North Pacific at the Commission’s Annual Meeting. Commitment to monitoring compliance with both the NPAFC Convention that bans directed fishing for salmon in the North Pacific and enforcing the UN Moratorium on large scale driftnet fishing, a fishing method historically used to capture salmon and other species in the North Pacific, are important missions of the fisheries enforcement agencies of NPAFC member countries.

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 hard 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.

Patrols by Canadian and United States fisheries enforcement aircraft from air facilities in Japan help maximize patrol duration and range. Facilitated coordination was achieved between Canadian flights and United States Coast Guard (USCG) patrol vessels. USCG observer aboard to support coordination with surface ship patrols. In a bilateral arrangement, the USCG hosted People’s Republic of China Coast Guard law enforcement officers aboard the USCG cutter to further increase effectiveness of ship patrols.

The combined multilateral efforts by enforcement agencies of NPAFC member countries resulted in no observed high seas driftnet or IUU fishing activities in 2015. The coordinated enforcement efforts of the member countries in 2015 covered significant portions of the NPAFC Convention Area, including over 400 hours of aircraft patrols and exceeding 100 ship days. Over 500 fishing vessels were sighted and none were detected conducting illegal fishing activities. Inspection of several transshipment vessels did not indicate retention of salmon captured on the high seas. This confirms that a high level of coordination and patrol and inspection effort acts as a strong deterrent to IUU fishing.

Status of acceptance of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement was also discussed. This international agreement is designed to harmonize and strengthen controls by preventing fish caught illegally from entering into the global marketplace. The treaty will enter into force 30 days after the last of 25 nations on June 5, 2016, ratify, accept, or approve it. Currently, 30 members have formally deposited their instruments of adherence. Effective and consistent application of this Agreement by nations will add a new level of deterrent by decreasing the profitability of illegal transshipping of fish at sea and in port.

Ongoing efforts to curtail the large-scale high seas driftnet threat by continuing a constant vigilance at sea and in port is crucial for sustainable fisheries management and the conservation of salmon in the North Pacific. Multilateral enforcement operations coordinated in the NPAFC arena, 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.

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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 the United States of America.



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