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# North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

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10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – 2002  
Vladivostok, Russia  
2002 October 6-11

## NEWS RELEASE

Representatives of Canada, Japan, Russia, and the United States, the primary states of origin for salmon stocks in the North Pacific, met in Vladivostok, Russia on October 6-11, 2002, for the Tenth Annual Meeting of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). Observers from the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation (FAO) and the Republic of Korea were also in attendance. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Anatoly Makoedov, President of the NPAFC.

The NPAFC was established by the Convention for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean (the Convention) which became effective on February 16, 1993. The Convention prohibits directed fishing for salmonids on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean and includes provisions to minimize the number of salmonids taken in other fisheries. The NPAFC promotes the conservation of salmonids in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas and serves as a venue for cooperation in and coordination of enforcement activities and scientific research.

The NPAFC's Committees on Enforcement, Scientific Research and Statistics, and Finance and Administration met to consider activities of the Parties in support of the objectives of the Convention.

The Committee on Enforcement reviewed enforcement efforts and activities in the Convention Area in 2002. All of the agencies directly responsible for the planning and execution of enforcement activities within the Convention Area attended, including representatives from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Fisheries Agency of Japan, the State Fisheries Committee of the Russian Federation and the Russian Federal Border Service, the United States National Marine Fisheries Service, and the United States Coast Guard. The cooperative enforcement efforts of the Parties have been successful in reducing illegal fishing operations within this Convention Area. Illegal operations have decreased from a high of 11 vessels in 1999 to almost no illegal operations in the past few years. The committee assessed the effectiveness of the Joint Operations Information Coordination Group (JOICG) and recommended that JOICG be continued for 2003. The Enforcement Procedures Working Group was created to review the existing and other possible enforcement activities. Due to the continued threat of high seas fishing for salmon in the Convention Area, all Parties agreed to maintain 2003 enforcement activities at high levels as a deterrent to the threat of potential unauthorized fishing activities. Canada invited all the participants to an enforcement evaluation and coordination meeting (EECM) in 2003 in Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands). This will provide an opportunity to experience the value of Pacific salmon to First Nations cultures.

The Committee on Scientific Research and Statistics reviewed and discussed research on a

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broad range of issues concerning Pacific salmonid stocks, such as changes in abundance, effects of ocean and atmospheric conditions, and other biological and ecological dynamics of salmonid production. International cooperation in salmon research among the Parties was reviewed. Continuing cooperation initiatives through the Bering-Aleutian Salmon International Survey Plan (BASIS) and the associated NPAFC science workplan were adopted. BASIS will provide the first ever synoptic seasonal information on distribution, abundance, and stock origins of all salmon species in the Bering Sea and adjacent areas. A workshop, "Application of stock identification in defining marine distribution and migration of salmon," will be held following the 2003 NPAFC Annual Meeting. Workplans arrangements will be finalized at the Research Planning and Coordinating Meeting (RPCM) in spring 2003.

The NPAFC scientific initiatives will be integrated with other international organization's research and data needs to meet the common challenges facing salmon.

Nearly 4.4 billion juvenile hatchery salmon were released in the North Pacific in 2001. This is a decrease from the 2000 level when 4.75 billion juvenile hatchery salmon were released. The total 2001 commercial salmon catch was 818,205 metric tons. While this is an increase over the 2000 commercial catch of 712,000 metric tons, commercial catches have been in a slow decline since reaching a peak in the mid 1990s. However, this decline is reflective of world markets and natural variations in stock abundance.

The Committee on Finance and Administration considered and adopted the 2002/2003 budget. Administrative and financial topics were discussed and approved, including agreement to increase the level of contribution by each nation.

The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the NPAFC is scheduled to be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A. in October 2003.

*For Information*

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