

---

# North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

---

---

14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – 2006  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada  
2006 October 23-27

## NEWS RELEASE

Salmon stocks in the North Pacific Ocean are healthy and well protected, as a result of strong cooperation on monitoring and surveillance and decisions based on strong science.

Representatives of Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States, the primary states of origin for salmon stocks in the North Pacific, met in Vancouver, Canada, October 23-27, 2006, for the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). The meeting was chaired by Guy Beaupré, President of the NPAFC.

Every year, Coast Guard and Enforcement representatives of these five countries coordinate their efforts to ensure that drift net fishing for salmon in the far reaches of the North Pacific is prevented. The NPAFC has been most successful in eliminating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing in its Convention Area. Detailed analysis and a coordinated enforcement plan is generated each year, from which the Parties base their at sea air patrol efforts to stop illegal activity. Cooperation and continuous exchanges of information are at the base of an effective force of action.

This past year, Coast Guard vessels from the United States and Russia conducted joint patrols in the Convention Area. Russian patrol vessels responded to sightings in the Western Pacific made from a Canadian long-range patrol aircraft. Japan made a joint operation with the U.S. Coast Guard using the Japanese aircraft. To further assist their efforts, a web based system developed by Russia to share information related to enforcement activity in the Convention Area allows the Parties to coordinate enforcement efforts and share observed illegal activity. This includes sending photos of illegal fishing vessel activity as it is occurring from the patrol aircraft to each of the Parties enforcement contacts.

High seas drift net vessels activity has been very low in recent years, however, in 2006, there was a significant increase in suspect activity in western portions of the Convention Area. In maintaining its efforts to deal with this threat of high seas fishing for salmon, the NPAFC recently drafted boarding guidelines for vessels of non-member countries that are observed targeting salmon in the Convention Area. The Commission is currently examining the possibility of application of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's Port State Control Measures.

Taiwanese authorities, which are official observers at the NPAFC, reported their efforts to ensure Taiwanese vessels and nationals do not fish salmon in the NPAFC Convention Area.

Due to the continued threat of high seas fishing for salmon in the Convention Area, all Parties

---

reaffirmed their commitment to maintain 2007 enforcement activities at high levels as a deterrent to the threat of potential unauthorized fishing activities. The Republic of Korea invited all the participants to the Enforcement Evaluation and Coordination Meeting to be held next February in Busan.

Lead salmon scientists met to further their understanding on Pacific salmon. The NPAFC provides the only forum in the world for scientists with this opportunity.

Japanese winter research in the Gulf of Alaska indicated that most chum salmon in the northern part of the Gulf were from North America, while salmon from Japan and Russia remained in the southern part. Other research also indicated specific behavior and ecology for southern populations of US Chinook salmon, and the early life history of chum salmon from the Republic of Korea and for salmon in the western Bering and Okhotsk Seas. There is also evidence that the Strait of Georgia ecosystem in southern British Columbia may be shifting to one that is favourable for pink, chum, and sockeye salmon.

The catch of Pacific salmon by all producing countries in 2005 was the second highest in recent history. Previous high levels occurred in 1995 and 2003. Pink salmon accounted for 50% of the catch by weight, followed by chum, sockeye, coho, chinook, and cherry (masu) salmon. Largest catches were reported by the United States (Alaska), Russia, and Japan (see table at the end).

While it is too early to report definitive catches for 2006, it is encouraging that preliminary catch estimates by Russia for 2006 are very similar to catches recorded in 2005. Preliminary catches in 2006 in Alaska showed major fluctuations in abundance. Returns of pink salmon in southeast Alaska were much lower than forecasted while chum salmon returns were very strong. Complicating these fluctuations of abundance are the ongoing consequences of climate change on salmon production. Oceanographic conditions have undergone dramatic changes in the Bering Sea in recent years. These conditions are being monitored by the NPAFC Bering-Aleutian Salmon International Survey (BASIS). Vessels from Japan, Russia, and the USA are involved in the ecosystem study of salmon and associated marine fishes in the entire Bering Sea. Results from this research will be reported at the NPAFC Symposium on BASIS which will be held in the USA in 2008.

The NPAFC has incorporated into its scope of research new work to develop a comprehensive genetic baseline for steelhead.

Preliminary 2005 Commercial Salmon Catches (thousands of metric tonnes)

	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Cherry	Total
Canada	2.0	0.9	1.1	12.6	10.4	-	27.1
Japan	0.1	0.0	0.1	15.9	222.2	0.9	239.2
Korea	-	-	-	-	0.1	-	0.1
Russia	0.6	19.5	0.8	205.5	32.6	0.0	258.9
U.S.A (AK)	4.8	121.1	14.4	252.2	43.5	-	436.0
(WA/OR/CA)	6.3	0.5	2.7	0.5	0.0	-	10.1
Total	13.8	142.0	19.1	486.7	308.8	1.0	971.4

---

The NPAFC was established by the Convention for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean (the Convention) in 1993. The NPAFC promotes the conservation of Pacific Salmon 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 Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the NPAFC is scheduled to be held in Vladivostok, Russia in October 2007.

*For Information*

NPAFC Secretariat  
Suite 502, 889 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3B2, Canada

Tel: (604) 775-5550  
Fax: (604) 775-5577  
E-mail: [secretariat@npafc.org](mailto:secretariat@npafc.org)  
Website: <http://www.npafc.org>