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# North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

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15<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – 2007  
Vladivostok, Russia  
2007 October 8-12

## NEWS RELEASE

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 Vladivostok, Russia, October 8-12, 2007, for the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). The meeting was chaired by Guy Beaupré, President of the NPAFC.

The NPAFC brings together the world's leading salmon scientists to further understanding of Pacific salmon and is the only multilateral forum providing scientists this opportunity. The meeting also provides the opportunity for the Parties' enforcement officials to plan their efforts to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated salmon fishing in the North Pacific.

In recent years, NPAFC Parties have documented renewed activity by vessels suspected of high seas driftnet (HSDN) fishing in the Western portion of the North Pacific Ocean, though overall HSDN activity continues to be very low. Coast Guard vessels from the United States, Russia and Japan conducted joint patrols in the NPAFC Convention Area in coordination with long range patrol aircraft from Canada, Japan, Russia and the United States. Patrol aircraft and surface vessels sighted multiple vessels suspected of HSDN fishing in the Convention Area, and a total of seven vessels were apprehended. Some vessels had several kilometres of driftnet on board. An Indonesian vessel apprehended by Russian officials had 90 tonnes of salmon on board. Investigations are on-going with respect to six vessels intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard that are being turned over to Chinese officials. Clearly, HSDN fishing is an on-going threat in the Convention Area.

In furthering efforts to deal with threats of high seas fishing for salmon, the NPAFC Annual Meeting provided an opportunity to refine its Integrated Information System (IIS). The system links to all enforcement agencies associated with the Commission and provides "real time" information instantaneously when HSDN is detected. The system enables the member countries to share observed illegal activity including photos, and thus coordinate their efforts to deal with the threat of illegal fishing in the vast Convention Area of the North Pacific.

Due to the continued threat of high seas fishing for salmon in the Convention Area, all Parties reaffirmed their commitment to maintain 2008 enforcement activities at high levels. Canada invited all the participants to the Enforcement Evaluation and Coordination Meeting to be held next February in Vancouver, and also plans to invite the Fisheries Working Group of the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum and the Technical Committee on Compliance of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

Although salmon fishing is prohibited in the Convention Area of the NPAFC, commercial salmon fishing occurs within each country's jurisdiction.

The total catch of Pacific salmon by all producing countries remains at high levels. The 2006 catch was approximately 863,000 metric tonnes which is slightly above the 1990-2006 average catch of 854,000 metric tonnes. This represents a 11% below the 2005 catch, mainly due to

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poor pink salmon harvests in North America. Pink salmon still accounted for 58% of the total number of fishes caught, followed by chum, sockeye, coho, chinook and cherry (masu) salmon.

Russian catches for 2007 are the highest on record, particularly for pink salmon from eastern Sakhalin and sockeye and Chinook from Kamchatka. Catches in US (Alaska) and Japan were also high. However, the trends for areas such as Canada, the Northwest United States and the Republic of Korea were not as strong.

These regional fluctuations in abundance need further consideration by scientists from NPAFC countries. It is suspected that the fluctuations result from ongoing impacts of climate changes 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.

NPAFC will host the International BASIS Symposium in Seattle, USA on November 23-25, 2008, in conjunction with its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. The purpose of the symposium is to summarize BASIS research conducted since 2002 and increase understanding of how climate change affects salmon growth and survival in the ocean. Further information is available from the NPAFC website ([www.npafc.org](http://www.npafc.org)). The NPAFC is also planning to work with the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) towards another symposium in 2010 to further overall scientific understanding of salmon behavior.

Finally, NPAFC will also undertake a process to review the organization's performance as recommended to all Regional Fisheries Management Organizations by the General Assembly of the UN and the FAO Committee on Fisheries.

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 Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the NPAFC is scheduled to be held in Seattle, U.S.A. in November 2008.

The Commission elected Mr. Dohyung Koo of Korea as the next President of NPAFC.

*For Information*

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