
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

27th Annual Meeting
Portland, Oregon, USA
2019 May 13–17

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORTH PACIFIC ANADROMOUS FISH COMMISSION HOLDS 27TH ANNUAL MEETING

Portland, Oregon, USA (May 17, 2019)—The 27th Annual Meeting of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) was held from May 13–17, 2019, in Portland, Oregon, USA.

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of Pacific salmon and steelhead in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas. It serves as a venue for cooperation in and coordination of enforcement activities and scientific research. The vast majority of salmon catches in the North Pacific originate from NPAFC member countries, which are Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States.

At the Commission's Annual Meeting, Plenary Sessions and the Commission's three standing committees, Enforcement, Scientific Research and Statistics, and Finance and Administration, were convened to discuss issues related to salmon and steelhead in the NPAFC Convention Area, which is the high seas of the North Pacific north of 33°N latitude.

This year, the Commission presented Capt. John Vincent O'Shea, United States Coast Guard (USCG) (Ret.) with the prestigious NPAFC Award for his significant contributions to the NPAFC for many years. He is a retired U.S. Coast Guard Captain and Senior Executive with more than 25 years of experience managing marine fisheries policy issues at the regional, national, and international levels. His last assignment in the U.S. Coast Guard was Chief of Operations for the 17th Coast Guard District, in Alaska. Capt. O'Shea was given the NPAFC Award in recognition of his sustained contributions in the areas of compliance and enforcement to the Commission's mission to conserve and manage anadromous salmon and steelhead stocks in the North Pacific Ocean and its adjacent seas.

At the Commission's enforcement meetings, the coordinated enforcement efforts of the NPAFC member countries in 2018 covered significant portions of the NPAFC Convention Area, over 400 hours of aircraft patrols, and more than 100 ship days, to deter and interrupt illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity. These combined multilateral efforts identified multiple possible instances of IUU fishing in 2018, and one Chinese flagged fishing vessel, *Run Da*, conducting illegal high seas driftnet (HSDN) fishing was intercepted by the USCG Cutter *Alex Haley* in June. The joint boarding and inspection of the *Run Da* revealed 80 tons of frozen salmon and one ton of squid on board. This vessel was added to the list of apprehended illegal salmon fishing vessels in the NPAFC Convention Area.

At the Commission's scientific meetings, leading salmon researchers from member countries reviewed commercial catch statistics compiled from information provided by each of the member nations. Preliminary 2018 North Pacific-wide salmon catches exceeded one million metric tonnes (1,067 thousand metric tonnes; 651.3 million fish).

Pink salmon constituted the majority of the total commercial catch (55% by weight) followed by chum (26%) and sockeye salmon (16%). Coho comprised 2% of the catch, while Chinook salmon, cherry salmon, and steelhead trout were each less than 1% of the catch by weight.

In 2019, salmon research surveys are planned to take place in the Bering Sea, the southern Chukchi Sea, the northwestern North Pacific, and the southern Sea of Okhotsk. Researchers will be examining conditions such as migration timing, abundance, distribution, survival, marine ecology, run size forecasting, stock identification, and salmon growth and body condition at sea. On March 18, 2019, the International Gulf of Alaska Expedition 2019 was successfully completed with 21 scientific personnel from five Pacific Rim countries (Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia, and the United States) aboard the chartered Russian Research Vessel *Professor Kaganovskiy*. Such international expedition is the first in decades to study salmon in the high seas and has already made many exciting discoveries.

The Commission discussed activities and plans for the International Year of the Salmon (IYS) which has a focal year in 2019 with research and outreach projects and events continuing through 2022. In October 2018, the NPAFC officially announced the start of the IYS by holding an opening event in Vancouver, B.C., Canada. They released a call to action for an intense burst of outreach and research through 2022 that will fill knowledge gaps, develop tools to equip and train a new generation of scientists and managers and raise awareness among decision makers, which, in combination, will achieve the conditions necessary for the future *resilience of salmon and people in a rapidly changing world*.

The five-day NPAFC Annual Meeting closed with an invitation from Japan to the Parties to attend the 2020 Annual Meeting in Hakodate, Japan.

-END-

Contact: Vladimir Radchenko
NPAFC Executive Director
Phone: +1-604-775-5550
Email: secretariat@npafc.org
Website <https://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, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America.