The Committee on Biology and Research at the annual meeting of the INPFC in Seattle, Washington, November, 1959, appointed a working party to undertake joint reporting on the distribution of salmon in the North Pacific Ocean. It was specified that this report should be concerned with the marine distribution of salmon without reference to their continent of origin. It was further indicated that the report should incorporate all pertinent information resulting from the joint research programme initiated by the three countries in 1955 and from the catch statistics and biological data collected by sampling the high seas commercial fishing operations.

The working party, selected by the Committee and approved by the Commission, including Messers Ishida, Manzer, and Hanavan, were instructed to meet in Tokyo, possibly as early as February, 1960. Because of the time necessary to prepare the large volume of data required for the report and the time commitments of regular assignments, it was necessary to delay the first meeting of the working party until the latter part of May.

The first meeting of the group was held in Tokyo on May 24. Initial discussions were concerned with an assessment of the available data, consideration of subjects which should be included in the report, and procedures for analysis and presentation. These discussions and the inventory of available data required approximately two weeks. During the ensuing month indices of relative abundance, based on catches by research vessels and commercial nets, were calculated and plotted.

Early in July the working party moved to the Hokkaido Regional Fisheries Research Laboratory at Yoichi to make use of data records which could not conveniently be transferred to Tokyo, and to avail itself of additional trained assistance. During this session, some biological data were analysed and plotted, and a start was made in writing the report.

As work on the report progressed, it was apparent that full reporting on all aspects of salmon distribution, within the time and with the information available, would not be possible. It was evident that the report in preparation would be a preliminary, but necessary step in the preparation of a more comprehensive document.
At the conclusion of the Yoichi meeting on July 20, in order to complete the preparation of a preliminary report, each member undertook to complete certain sections upon return to his laboratory. The section on pink salmon was assumed by Mr. Ishida, chum salmon by Mr. Manzer, and sockeye salmon by Mr. Hanavan. Sections on coho and chinook salmon are also planned and are being prepared as time permits. This preliminary report will be submitted to the Secretariat for transmittal to the Committee on Biology and Research for its consideration during the annual meetings in 1960.

The working party recommends an additional working session, during the annual meeting of the Commission, to incorporate in the report relative abundance information obtained during the 1960 season and other information based on biological and environmental data from former years.

The working party further recommends that additional detailed mother-ship data be made available in the near future and that it meet again to consider these data and incorporate them in a more detailed report. This working session should be held in Japan where the data are located.

J. I. Manzer
T. Ishida
M. G. Hanavan