



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

## Regulations for Management of Scientific Data and Information

(revised in December 2023)

These Regulations are intended to govern the security of, exchange of, access to and dissemination of scientific data and computer code (referred to as code hereafter) held by, or accessed by Members of the Commission, its subsidiary bodies, the Secretariat, and by service providers, contractors, or consultants acting on their behalf or others so authorized for access by the Secretariat. These Regulations supplement the NPFC Data Sharing and Data Security Protocol which is an overall Commission's policy for data management and security.

### I. Guidance for Management of Scientific Data and Code

#### 1. Objectives

The objectives of this Guidance are (1) to support stock assessments, ecosystem assessments and accumulation of scientific knowledge of fisheries resources under the Commission's jurisdiction, (2) to encourage cooperation on scientific analyses among Members, and (3) to establish a guidance on handling scientific data and code.

#### 2. Scientific Data included in Members' Annual Reports

Scientific data (e.g., catch amount, number of vessels, number of fishing days and so on) included in Members' Annual Reports should be uploaded to the public section of the NPFC website for public access and use. In order not to reveal the individual activities of any vessel, catch and effort data in the public domain shall be made up of observations from a minimum of three vessels, unless the owner of the data decides otherwise.

#### 3. Other scientific data and code, not included in Members' Annual Reports, submitted for use in stock assessments and ecosystem assessments

The Secretariat should not disclose Members' scientific data or code submitted by means other than Members' Annual Reports or meeting documents open for the public in accordance with paragraph 4.

Members may cite and/or use such data or code when working on matters under consideration by the Scientific Committee and its subsidiary bodies, including informal working groups.

If a Member or cooperating non-contracting Party (CNCP) wishes to cite and/or use these data or code for work that is intended to be conducted or shared outside of the NPFC, such Member or CNCP should consult with the provider(s) of the data or code through the Secretariat, stating 1) the data or code subject to the request, and 2) the purpose for which the data or code is intended to be used. The Secretariat should immediately notify the provider(s) of the request. The provider(s) should inform the Secretariat within 30 calendar days whether to accept or reject the request. If the provider(s) reject the request, the provider(s) should state the reason(s) for the

rejection. If the provider(s) accept the request, the provider(s) may request an agreed-upon credit line in any subsequently-created product. Those who cited/used data or code should not distribute the data or code further nor use it for the purpose not declared.

## **II. Regulations for management of scientific meeting documents, meeting reports and intersessional communications on the NPFC website**

### **4. Working Papers, Meeting Info Papers, Information Papers, Reference Documents/Papers, Observer Papers**

To enhance and encourage collaborations with researchers, scientists, RFMOs, and science organizations, and to encourage transparency of the NPFC processes, the SC recommends making the above named documents available to the public through the NPFC website. The default rule would be that all the above named documents would be released to the public 45 days (inclusive of weekends and holidays) following the closure of the meeting to which they were submitted. All meeting papers submitted to any NPFC scientific meetings through the Secretariat should indicate how they should be cited in accordance with the NPFC Document Rules. If the document author(s) or submitting Member do not authorize the release of the document, they must indicate that clearly on the cover page or first page of the document, OR they may request to the Secretariat in writing of their desire to not release the document during the 44 days prior to document publication on the website.

### **5. SC Meeting Reports, SC Subsidiary Body Reports (SSC, TWG) and Other Scientific Reports (Workshop)**

5.1. The SC recommends that the above named documents be released to the public after acceptance by the Commission Members within 45 days in accordance with the procedures stated in Paragraph 8.2 of Rules of Procedure.

5.2. For SC subsidiary body reports: If there are portions of the report which are deemed by the subsidiary body to be too sensitive to release prior to the SC report, the specific sensitive portions may be redacted, and the report released as described in #5.1 above. Following the SC meeting, the entire report (inclusive of redacted portions) will be released in conjunction with the SC report. If the report as a whole is deemed too sensitive to release, the report may be held and released to the public in conjunction with the SC Meeting Report. Decisions about which portion or whether the whole report is to be redacted shall be made during the subsidiary body meeting.

### **6. Intersessional Communication using the NPFC Collaboration website**

The NPFC has made available a web-based tool to facilitate discussion of its subsidiary bodies, informal working groups, discussion groups, and other temporary groups on a project-by-project basis. Access to this tool is restricted to members of a specific project/topic. Following the completion of the discussion, the group facilitator/chair may summarize the discussions to make them available and accessible to the appropriate Commission body (TCC, SC, SWG MSE PS,

Commission). At the conclusion of the discussions of the group and after summary is complete, the discussion text and documents will be archived by the Secretariat but not maintained on the website except for a summary made by the group facilitator/chair.

7. Redaction or withdrawal of Working Papers, Meeting Info Papers, Information Papers, Reference Documents/Papers, Observer Papers which were submitted to workshop or meeting

Documents of the types listed above may not be redacted or withdrawn from the public or Member-only area of the website by a Member or the Secretariat once it has been published unless notification is provided to all Members which details the reason for the withdrawal request. If an error is identified in a publicly available document, the member responsible for the document submission can submit a cover letter or document text which describes the error and the resolution to be prepended to the original document. Errors identified in documents prior to publication on the public website or during meetings or workshops can be revised or documents withdrawn before or during the meeting, but other members or meeting participants must be notified of the specifics of the changes as soon as possible.