NPFC-2024-SC09-IP10 (Rev. 1)

**Press Release**

The NPFC Scientific Committee (SC) and its subsidiary bodies met from 9 to 20 December 2024 in person with remote participation via video conferencing. The meetings were attended by the NPFC Members (Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Chinese Taipei, the United States of America and Vanuatu), observers from inter- and non-governmental organizations as well as invited experts.

The SC marked the 10th Anniversary of the NPFC which will be celebrated by the Commission at the end of this operational year in March 2025.

Two subsidiary body meetings were held before the SC meeting and discussed bottom fish and marine ecosystems, and stock assessment of Pacific saury, respectively.

* The Small Scientific Committee on Bottom Fish and Marine Ecosystems proposed revisions of the conservation and management measures for bottom fisheries and protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME), provided scientific advice on splendid alfonsino, discussed assessment and management of North Pacific armorhead, sablefish and skilfish, reviewed the progress in VME identification and assessment of the impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs and agreed to update assessments on bottom fishing activities’ SAIs on VMEs.
* The Small Scientific Committee on Pacific Saury (SSC PS) updated the stock assessment of Pacific saury using Bayesian state-space production models, provided input for the harvest control rule (HCR) for Pacific saury established by the Commission in 2024, reviewed progress in developing age-structured models, and provided scientific advice for the management of Pacific saury stock. The SSC PS also supported the development of a management procedure for Pacific saury.

In addition, the SC reviewed the outcomes of other scientific meetings held earlier in 2024, the Technical Working Group on Chub Mackerel Stock Assessment (TWG CMSA) and SSC on Neon Flying Squid (SSC NFS). The SC endorsed the stock assessment report for chub mackerel and tasked the TWG CMSA to work intersessionally to review the input data and, if possible, update the stock assessment report before the Commission meeting in March 2025.

The Scientific Committee reviewed recommendations from the subsidiary body meetings and provided scientific advice to the Commission with respect to the management of fisheries resources and protection of marine ecosystems in the NPFC Convention Area. The SC reviewed the progress of three small working groups (SWG) for other priority species (Japanese flying squid, Japanese sardine, blue mackerel) which worked intersessionally toward assessment of these stocks. The SC established a new SWG on Data to focus on the development of a database and data management system for scientific data. The SC updated its 5-year Research and Work Plans, addressed issues related to data collection, management and security, and discussed recent and future cooperation with other organizations to facilitate the implementation of its Work Plan.

The next SC meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in Japan from 15-18 December 2025, with preceding SSC BF-ME and SSC PS meetings from 8-13 December.

The meeting reports will be available on the NPFC website in February 2025. For more information visit the meeting web page: <https://www.npfc.int/meetings> or contact the NPFC Secretariat [secretariat@npfc.int](mailto:secretariat@npfc.int)



A cake with fruit on top

Description automatically generated