



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

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Paper submitted by WWF





WWF POSITION

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North Pacific Fisheries
Commission (NPFC):
Osaka, Japan – March 24 – 27,
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World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) would like to thank the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) for providing the opportunity to attend the 9th Commission Meeting as an observer and to contribute to the critically important role that it plays in the proper management of the North Pacific Ocean (NPO) fisheries.

WWF calls for improvement of the following measures, in particular in order to achieve sustainable fisheries in the NPFC.

Data sharing, Stock assessment and Harvest Strategies

For all fish species under NPFC management, a harvest strategy (HS) including target/limit reference points (TRPs/LRPs), harvest control rules (HCRs), and Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) should be introduced based on result of stock assessment.

Especially for Chub Mackerel, whose catch has been drastically decreasing in recent years, a HS and HCR that can maintain the stock at a sustainable level will firmly protect not only the mackerel resources, but also the industries and employment related to it.

As for squids, the catch in the North Pacific has been significantly reduced due to IUU fishing and other factors, yet the NPFC has not yet introduced even minimum standards, such as a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for both Neon flying squid and Japanese flying squid. To prevent further decline of the stocks, it is essential to introduce robust fisheries management to address these shortcomings.

WWF recommends that the NPFC:

- **Agree on the results of the first stock assessment for Chub Mackerel conducted by the Scientific Committee as per schedule.**
- **Reduce the TAC for Chub mackerel to encourage the stock to return to an increasing trend, in accordance with the Scientific Committee's advice that fishing mortality(F) is too high for this species.**
- **Complete stock assessments for squid as soon as possible and introduce TAC based on the precautionary principle; start considering the introduction of HCR based on MSE and prepare a roadmap for the introduction of a sustainable fishing strategy for species such as squid, for which stock declines are significant.**
- **Share fishery data (catch, effort, size etc.) on the same stocks of all species managed by NPFCs, regardless of whether they are inside or outside the NPFC management area, so that fishery status can be easily monitored for species that have not completed stock assessments.**

Measures against IUU Fishery

IUU fishing is recognized as one of the serious international issues, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals, and the G7 and G20, given its linkages to overfishing as well as being a hotbed of slave labour. In recent years, IUU fishing measures have been strengthened in many Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs). In addition, the EU requires a catch certificate for all fish species it imports, and the U.S. requires it for 13 fish species before importing, and similar measures have been taken in Japan for NPFC-managed species of Pacific saury, mackerels, squids, and sardines. Therefore, NPFC is strongly encouraged to strengthen its IUU fishery measures so as to ensure it does not fall behind other RFMOs.

WWF recommends that the NPFC:

- **Introduce catch documentation scheme (CDS) for all target species. Especially for Pacific Saury, where MSE implementation has already been completed, CDS should be introduced as soon as possible to ensure its management.**
- **The Key Data Elements (KDEs) in the CDS should be harmonized with those of other RFMOs and Japanese Import Control Rules.**
- **Require a human observer to be on board or introduce electronic monitoring systems (EM) for all fishing vessels. EM standards should be established as soon as possible in a manner that harmonizes with the other standards of WCPFC, IATTC, ICCAT and IOTC where such standards have already been established.**

Conservation of deep-sea ecosystems

NPFC has played an important role in the NPO's balancing of deep-sea ecosystem conservation and fisheries. To ensure that these contributions have not been in vain, the fishery must be managed based on the latest science.

WWF recommends that the NPFC:

- **Close two fishing areas in Yuryaku Seamount, based on the advice of the Scientific Committee.**



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For more information

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