



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

NPFC-2025-FAC07-WP10

SECRETARIAT WORK PLAN 2025/2026

ABSTRACT

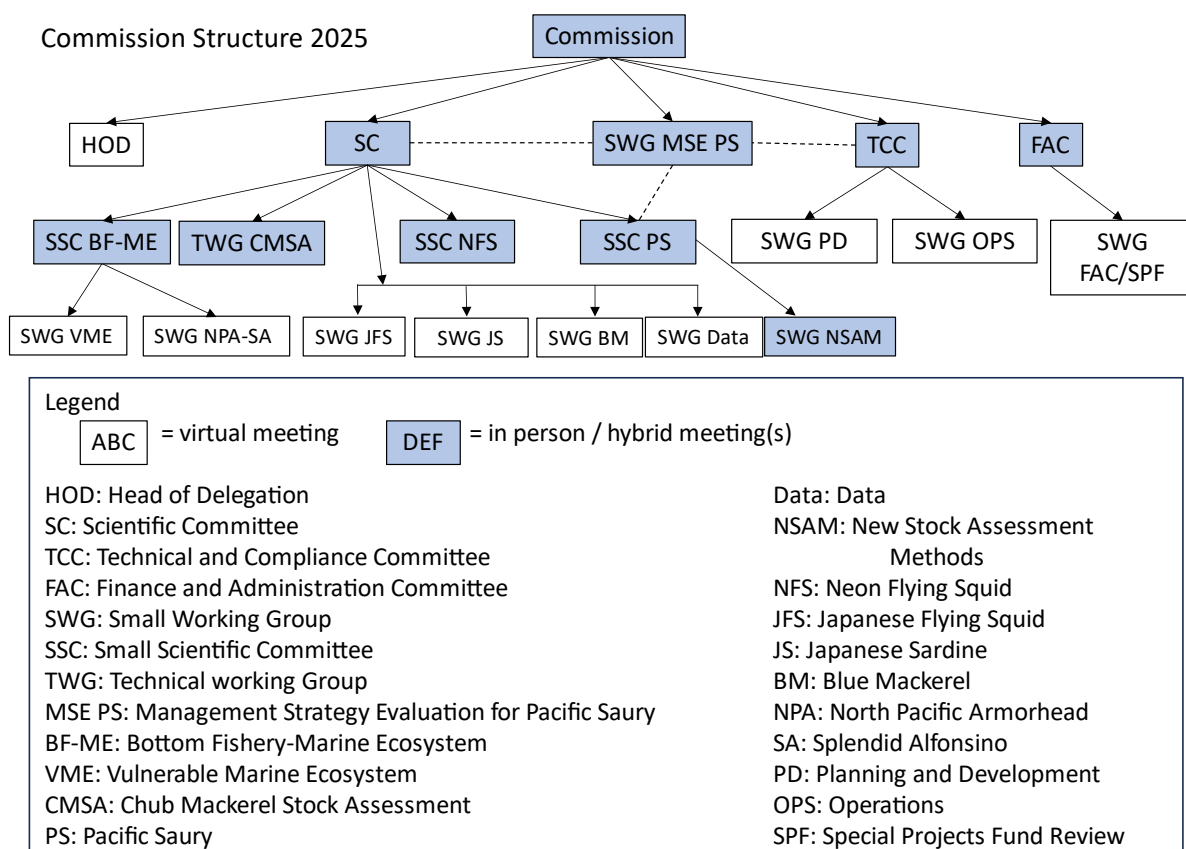
This paper provides the Secretariat's work plan for the 2025/2026 fiscal year for four key areas (the workplan will be informed by COM09 decisions):

- Coordination of scientific activities of the Commission;
- Coordination of compliance activities and operational reporting to the Commission;
- Data management and security;
- Provision of finance and administration services to support the Commission in the execution of Secretariat's work plan

DETAILS:

The function of the NPFC Secretariat is the provision of services to, and representation of, the Commission as determined by its Members in accordance with the Convention and relevant rules and regulations. As identified by the Secretariat and shared with Members, four key areas highlighted below provide the Secretariat and the Commission guidance with regard to the Commission's activities in 2025/2026 fiscal year. The structure of Commission related entities is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Commission related entities supported by the Secretariat



I. Coordination of scientific activities of the Commission

The Secretariat coordinates the scientific activities of the Commission including:

- a. Implementation of the Scientific Committee rolling Five-Year Research Plan and Work Plan for each Priority Area:
 - Stock assessments for target fisheries and bycatch species
 - Ecosystem approach to fisheries management
 - Data collection, management, and security
 - Climate change impact
- b. Implementation of the scientific projects to be conducted in 2025/2026 (see the table below for details).
- c. Organizing informal virtual meetings to facilitate intersessional work, including rapporteur services: 13 SC subsidiary bodies, 2-4 meetings per each.
- d. Organizing formal meetings of SC, SSCs and TWGs to finalize outputs, formalize recommendation and develop scientific advice: 1 SC, 5 SSCs and 2 TWG meetings per year.
- e. Providing infrastructure services for data collection, sharing and dissemination, including assistance in:
 - Developing a new database for scientific data (see details under IV. Data management)
 - Developing/updating data collection standards and data provision templates
 - Providing data storage and maintaining data inventories
 - Compiling annual catch and effort statistics
 - Developing/updating data sharing and security policies
 - Identifying data gaps which can be fulfilled by an observer program
- f. Conducting data analyses: NPA monitoring survey, PS weekly catch, annual catch and effort trends for NPFC priority species, scope study on VMS data for science etc.
- g. Assisting Members in selection and contracting invited experts: 4 contracts for PS, CM, NFS, and bottom fish.
- h. Making scientific data, meeting documents, policies and templates available to relevant SC members while ensuring data security.
- i. Promoting cooperation with other organizations
 - NPAFC: five-year Work Plan to implement the NPAFC/NPFC Memorandum of Cooperation
 - PICES: PICES annual meeting in 2025, PICES-ICES SPF Working Group, establishment of a joint NPFC/PICES Working Group, updated Framework for cooperation
 - BECI: following up with the developments of the Basin Scale Events and Coastal Impacts (BECI) project
 - FAO DSF project: collaborative activities on climate change impact, data-limited stock assessment, shark ID guide, and ecosystem approach to fisheries management
 - FAO FIRMS: providing stock and fisheries information in accordance with the partnership agreement
 - SPRFMO, ISC/WCPFC: implementation of MOUs
- j. Liaising with TCC for issues of common interest
- k. Assisting Members with addressing science-related recommendations from the NPFC Performance Review report

Scientific projects

#	Project	Time	Status	Next step: activities, required funds
1	Pacific saury stock assessment meetings (meeting costs)	Every year	<i>TWG PSSA meetings: Feb 2017, Dec 2017, Nov 2018, Mar 2019.</i> <i>SSC PS meetings: Nov 2019, Aug 2023.</i>	WG NSAM meeting. Jul 2025. <i>2025 FY: 2mil JPY</i> <i>Source: China's Voluntary Contribution Fund (VCF)</i> SSC PS15 meeting. Sep 2025. <i>2025 FY: virtual, no funds required.</i>
2	Chub mackerel stock assessment meeting (meeting costs)	Every year	<i>TWG CMSA meetings: Dec 2017, Mar 2019, Sep 2023, Jul 2024.</i>	TWG CMSA11 meeting. Jul 2025. <i>2025 FY: 1.5mil JPY (10,000USD)</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i> TWG CMSA12. Early 2026. <i>2025 FY: virtual, no funds required.</i>
3	Neon flying squid stock assessment meeting (meeting costs)	Every year		SSC NFS02 meeting. Jul 2025. <i>2025 FY: 1.5mil JPY (10,000USD)</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
4	Invited expert to support TWG CMSA (consultancy fee and travel costs for one in-person meeting)	2020-current	An external expert has been contracted to support TWG CMSA.	<i>2025 FY:</i> <i>0.6mil JPY - SC fund, and 0.8mil JPY - US VCF.</i>
5	Invited expert to support SSC PS (consultancy fee and travel costs for two in-person meeting)	2019-current	An external expert has been contracted to support SSC PS and its subsidiary WG NSAM.	<i>2025 FY: 2.4mil JPY</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>

6	Invited expert to support WG NSAM (consultancy fee and travel costs for one in-person meeting)	2024-		<i>2025 FY: 3.3mil JPY</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
7	Invited expert to support SSC NFS (consultancy fee and travel costs for two in-person meetings)	2024-current	An external expert has been contracted to support SSC NFS.	<i>2025 FY: 2.2mil JPY</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
8	Invited expert to support SA and NPA stock assessments	2024-current	Two external experts were contracted in 2024 as a separate project covered by the Special Project Fund.	<i>2025 FY: 2.2mil JPY</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
9	PICES Annual meeting	Every year	Travel support to a participant of the SC or its subsidiary bodies to attend PICES Annual meeting.	<i>2025 FY: 0.75mil JPY (5,000USD)</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
10	Other science meetings / capacity development	2024	Training for capacity building or travel support to attend other relevant science meetings.	<i>2026 FY: 0.75mil JPY (5,000USD)</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
11	PICES/ICES/FAO Small Pelagic Fish Symposium. 4-8 May 2026, La Paz, Mexico	2025& 2026	An invitation from PICES for co-sponsorship and participation in the symposium.	<i>2025 FY: 0.75mil JPY (5,000USD)</i> <i>2026 FY: 0.75mil JPY (5,000USD)</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>
12	Database for scientific data	2025-2026	A proposal to develop a database for scientific data.	<i>2025 FY: 10,000 EUR</i> <i>2026 FY: 20,000 EUR</i> <i>Source: EU's VCF and Members' in kind contribution</i>
	Total			<i>2025 FY: 15.2mil JPY</i> <i>Source: SC fund.</i>

II. Coordination of the joint SC-TCC-COM Small Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation for Pacific Saury (SWG MSE PS)

- a. Organizing joint SC-TCC-COM SWG MSE PS meetings to develop an MSE for Pacific saury: 1-2 meetings per year
- b. Assisting Members in selection and contracting an invited expert
- c. Supporting SWG MSE PS's intersessional activities including informal virtual meetings and liaison with SSC PS

III. Coordination of compliance activities of the Commission

The Secretariat coordinates compliance activities of the Commission including:

- a. Implementation of compliance work plan and priorities through the two SWGs, Operations and Planning and Development, to address the following:
 - i. Preparation for implementation of anticipated CMM for a regional transshipment observer program
 - ii. Continued implementation and refinement of transshipment reporting and analysis
 - iii. Implementation and analysis of NPFC regional VMS
 - iv. Implementation of the Compliance Monitoring Scheme and provision of the resultant Compliance Monitoring Report
 - v. Maintaining the Vessel Registry
 - vi. Implementation of the HSBI procedure
- b. Coordinating and assisting Members to hold TCC and SWG meetings in 2025/2026
- c. Review of existing CMMs for revision and consideration of new CMMs, if any, from Members
- d. Maintain the Vessel Registry and provide assistance to new CNCPs as they join the Commission
- e. Maintain and upgrade the e-IUU vessel system, e-annual report system, and development of the data warehouse to assist the Commission in the analysis of the data
- f. Coordinate the e- IUU vessel listing process from data submitted by Members
- g. Provide Draft Compliance report for TCC09 meeting
- h. Address VMS and other electronic monitoring system issues and assess compliance as directed by the Commission
- i. Promoting cooperation with other organizations in compliance: IMCS, TCN, PPFCN, NPAFC, WCPFC, SPRFMO. The Tuna Compliance Network will meet in June 2025 at the NPFC Secretariat office in Tokyo.
- j. Other tasking to be set at TCC08 and COM09

IV. Data management and security and Information Technology

The data management system supports the storing and analysis of scientific and compliance data

for the Commission's decision-making process. The NPFC relational database is designed to provide a secure, user-friendly, accessible, and reliable platform for compiling information to meet the Commission's scientific and compliance needs.

The database is structured to integrate all data modules within the Commission, ensuring a streamlined, efficient decision-making process for Members. In addition, enhancing the efficiency of electronic services provided by the Secretariat to Members and other stakeholders is a key priority. To this end, the Secretariat is continuously working on database improvements and will undertake several initiatives to further develop the Commission's data management system, including:

a. SC Data Development

At its most recent meeting, the Scientific Committee (SC) endorsed the development of an SC database to facilitate more efficient management and utilization of scientific data for analyses. The SC also agreed to establish the SWG Data to provide direction on the SC needs in developing an advanced data management system. Currently, the project is in the initial stage of development and defining the project's scope and specifications in detail.

b. NPFC Member Account Management Project

Currently, the Members accounts and all access on the NPFC website is updated manually by the Secretariat based on Member requests. The goal of this project is to introduce a more flexible and user-friendly interface, allowing each Member's group administrator to directly add, update, and manage their group members, thereby improving overall efficiency and accessibility. The Secretariat has provided guidelines to the service provider, and the project is expected to be completed this calendar year. This will also include increased security options such as two factor authentication for sensitive data.

c. Review of NPFC Data Management System

The NPFC data management system has evolved significantly, incorporating systems for the transshipment reporting system, catch reporting, e-IUU, HSBI, VMS, Vessel Registry, and Annual Report, among others. The Secretariat will undertake a comprehensive review of these systems, supported by expert analysis and guidance. The review will focus on examining the overall data structure, compiling a data inventory, and establishing appropriate permission levels. This review will benefit the NPFC and its stakeholders by enhancing data transparency, ensuring secure and efficient access to critical information, and improving overall system reliability.

d. **Member Portal**

The Secretariat plans to develop a Member Portal, incorporating a dashboard that will allow Members to easily locate required submissions, track deadlines, and monitor the status of their submissions. This initiative aims to streamline the submission process, enhance user accessibility, and improve overall efficiency.

e. **Integration of Air Surveillance Data**

As directed by Members, the Secretariat plans to develop a mechanism for integrating aerial surveillance data into the NPFC's existing data management system. This enhancement will strengthen data collection, improve analytical capabilities, and support more effective decision-making.

f. **Transshipment API**

The Secretariat has developed the Transshipment API data entry system to support straightforward data entry by Members and is currently working with interested Members to facilitate Member-side system development.

g. **Website Updates**

The Secretariat will update the NPFC website regularly to enhance public awareness and provide Members with the necessary system access for various Commission operations.

V. Finance and Administration

1. Financial matters to support the Secretariat and Commission in the execution of its duties

Securing funds for the Commission's activities and implementation of approved activities through formal and internationally recognized financial mechanisms is one of the areas for the Secretariat to assist Members and the Commission to achieve objectives of the Convention.

Following are the major financial activities for 2025/2026:

- a. Drafting a four-year budget plan 2026-2029 (proposed budgets for 2026 and 2027, indicative budgets for 2028 and 2029) for approval at the 10thth Commission meeting;
- b. Submission of the external Auditor's Report for the Commission's 2023/2024 financial affairs
- c. Continue to implement (Quick Books for Non-Profits) to support streamlined financial reporting

2. Provision of administrative services to the Commission and its subsidiary bodies

1) Hosting Commission meetings

The Secretariat facilitates all NPFC meetings to be held in 2025 by providing logistical support and preparing meeting documents and reports:

- a. Commission and Subsidiary-body Meetings
 - 8th Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), 18-21 March 2025
 - 7th Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), 22 March 2025
 - 9th Session of the Commission, 24-27 March 2025
 - 10th Scientific Committee, 16-19 December 2025
 - Potentially the 10th Session of the Commission if it is agreed to host in this fiscal year (i.e., March 2026)
- b. Small Working Group on Management Strategy Evaluation for Pacific Saury (SWG MSE PS) meeting, Jan/Feb 2026
- c. Small Scientific Committees and Technical Working Groups meetings
- d. TCC SWG meetings to take place as decided by the TCC
- e. SC SWGs meetings to take place as decided by the SC

2) Cooperation with other organizations

The Secretariat currently liaises with other organizations including RFMOs by attending their meetings for information sharing and for developing other joint or reciprocal activities of mutual interest. In 2025/2026, the meetings scheduled to be represented by Secretariat staff are as follows:

Meeting	Date and place	Purpose	Expected outcomes
32 nd NPAFC Annual Meeting	12-16 May 2025 Vancouver, Canada	Secretariat to attend annual meeting of NPAFC	Facilitation of cooperation with NPAFC based on the work plan to be agreed by both Commissions to implement MOC established in 2019
ISC 25	17-20 June 2025 Korea	Secretariat to attend the plenary meeting	Facilitate cooperation with ISC under the recently signed MOU.

PICES Annual meeting	November 2025, Yokohama, Japan	Secretariat to attend annual meeting of PICES and intersessional meetings of its committees and working groups (virtually or in-person)	Enhancing scientific cooperation between NPFC and PICES as specified in the Framework for cooperation, including such key areas as Stock assessment support, VMEs and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries.
FAO DSF Project Steering Committee meeting	January 2026 Rome, Italy	Secretariat to attend the 3 rd Project Steering Committee meeting (virtually or in-person)	Review of the progress made and discussion on workplan for 2026 including joint activities between NPFC and DSF project
GFETW 8	Mid 2026 TBD (Asia Pacific)	Secretariat to attend the Global Fisheries Enforcement Workshop, hosted by IMCS Network, planned for mid 2026 in Asia Pacific	The GFETW is a biennial workshop that brings together the global fisheries community to discuss priority and emerging MCS challenges and opportunities to exchange information and share lessons learned.

Further representation will be determined at TCC, FAC and the Commission Meetings.

Besides attendance at the meetings, there are areas for cooperation with other organizations, which require further consideration and input from the Commission:

- a. Implementation of MOUs with SPRFMO, ISC and WCPFC.
- b. Cooperation for compliance purposes in line with Commission objectives (e.g., with all Members for VMS and HSBI, Pan Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network, Tuna Compliance Network (TCN)).
- c. Cooperation with FAO ABNJ Deep Sea Fisheries Project Phase 2 as one of the partner organizations with commitment of in-kind contribution to the project

3) Enhancing public awareness

The Secretariat will enhance public awareness through various means:

- a. Develop a cooperative mechanism with the Tokyo University of Marine Science and

Technology (the location of the NPFC Secretariat) to allow for increased engagement (e.g., lectures and outreach, education opportunities for TUMSAT students, supporter access to facilities such as electronic library or meeting space, and research cooperation)

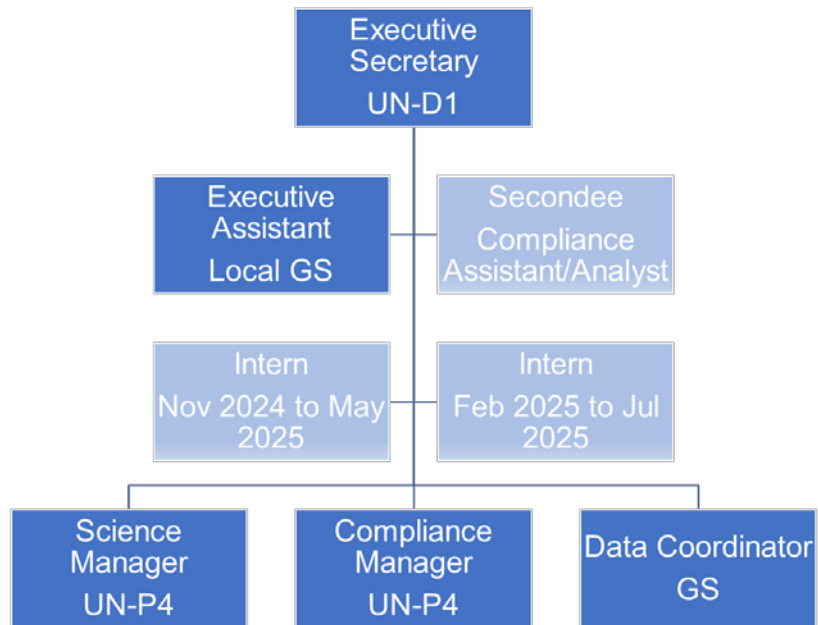
- b. Maintain and update official website to provide the public information on Commission's activities
- c. Give lectures and seminars relevant to NPFC work upon request from local government or universities and international fora
- d. Submit articles to newsletters of RSN and RFMOs
- e. Publish the NPFC Yearbook to entail activities of the Commission for 2024
- f. Receive visitors from international organizations, local government, embassies, and universities

4) Management of human resources (organization chart shown in Figure 2)

Effective management of human resources intends to maximize employee performance while considering the best economic use of the resources of the Commission. According to the Secretariat's Work Plan and Commission's decision, the Secretariat will coordinate the following:

- a. Initiate process to recruit a new Compliance Manager as current incumbent is not seeking renewal (to arrive for July 2026).
- b. Conduct annual performance reviews of the Secretariat staff for 2024/2025 fiscal year (April 2024-March 2025): staff performance review by Executive Secretary, and a performance review of the Executive Secretary by the Commission.
- c. Implement General Service and Professional Staff pay and benefit changes (if adopted).
- d. A major focus for this fiscal is to document processes and procedures related to HR and linked to administrative, financial and data considerations.
- e. Continue to ensure that the Secretariat complies with Japanese labor law related to benefits for Japanese staff.
- f. Manage intern process (if amended policy is adopted) and secondees from Members after consideration and approval by the Commission.

Figure 2: Secretariat structure



Note to Figure 2: Contractors and consultants are not represented. The decision on Seconded for 2025/2026 will be taken at COM09.