



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

NPFC-2026-COM10-IP08

Submitted by the Secretariat

Cooperation with Other Organizations

Abstract

This Information Paper reports the Commission's efforts and progress in liaising with other relevant international organizations during 2025/2026.

Introduction

With reference to Article 21 of the Convention, cooperation with relevant international organizations such as RFMOs, scientific bodies, and other agencies, is one of the important steps that the Commission should take to meet the objectives of the Convention. NPFC has maintained formal relations with other international organizations since the establishment of the Commission. These are outlined on our website (<https://www.npfc.int/Cooperation-with-other-Organizations>). During 2025/2026, the Commission has made progress in cooperating with a number of international organizations including those with overlapping geographical areas with the NPFC Convention Area. The purpose of this working paper is to report to Members on the intersessional activities of the Commission in liaising with other relevant organizations and seek guidance from the Commission to enhance cooperation with them.

Status of Relations

NPAFC

NPFC cooperates with NPAFC in diverse areas of interest to both organizations. The Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) signed in May 2019 between the NPFC and the NPAFC has facilitated cooperation between the two RFMOs. The NPFC provided financial support to the NPAFC International Year of the Salmon pan-Pacific survey in 2022. The NPFC also implemented CMM 2024-16 on Anadromous Fish, where the cooperation between the two Commissions was acknowledged. In 2026, the NPAFC is hosting two workshops on the margins of their 2026 Annual Meeting with a focus on the following areas:

1. NPAFC Workshop on Interactions between Fisheries and Anadromous Fish in the North Pacific High Seas, on May 13, 2026, in Vancouver, Canada.
2. NPAFC workshop on Interactions Between Salmon, Ecosystems, and Climate: From Mechanisms to Predictive Models, on May 16–17, 2026, in Vancouver.

3. Consideration is noted in the Secretariat Workplan to update the MOC implementation workplan. Areas of recent focus have been -- Exchange of data and information
 - a. Terms of Reference of NPAFC/NPFC SharePoint was agreed by NPFC in March 2025 and by NPAFC in May 2025
 - b. Coordinate research activities for enhanced scientific cooperation in the North Pacific Ocean
 - i. NPFC has supported the BECI (Basin-scale Events and Coastal Impacts) project that was jointly developed by NPAFC and PICES and being implemented through PICES.
 - c. Cooperate to share information relating to species of special interest for each Commission

The Executive Secretary attended the 2025 NPAFC Annual Meeting and participated in plenary, the open session of the Enforcement Operations meeting and the SCRS. Discussions between Secretariats occurred and considered how to support the planned workshops.

PICES

The first 5-year Framework for Enhanced Scientific Collaboration in the North Pacific between NPFC and PICES was adopted in 2019. It was reviewed in 2024 and extended by NPFC and PICES for another 5 years, 2025-2029. The 2019 Framework identified three major areas of mutual interest that were to be a focus during the first 5 years, to 2024: (i) support for stock assessment for priority species (ii) vulnerable marine ecosystems and (iii) ecosystem approach to fisheries. The revised 2025-2029 Framework maintains these three areas as still of priority for joint activities, but also noted that climate change impacts will be considered across all priority areas and incorporated where relevant. Examples of impacts include: distributional changes of fish stocks, the impact of ocean acidification and factors affecting species life history parameters and productivity. Data sharing and data management were also seen as something to be encouraged.

Based on the Framework for Enhanced Scientific Collaboration in the North Pacific between NPFC and PICES, the organizations held the following collaborative activities:

- a. NPFC representatives (Dr. Kitakado and Dr. Oshima) took part in the PICES-ICES joint Working Group on *Sustainable Pelagic Forage Communities* (WGSPF) established in 2024 to contribute to the implementation of the workplan and discuss the scope, potential scientific program and logistics for the next SPF 2026 symposium.
- b. NPFC supported the PICES/ICES/FAO SPF-2026 symposium, and NPFC scientists will attend the symposium.
- c. The PICES-2025 annual meeting took place in Yokohama, Japan in November

2025. ES and SM took part in this meeting, including participating in the PICES workshop on Climate-Ready Fisheries Management: Reviewing Effective Strategies for Developing Decision Support Tools, and representing NPFC at business meetings of the Governing Council, Science Board and Fishery Science Committee.
- d. NPFC expressed its support for the development and implementation of the BECI project in line with the NPFC-PICES Framework for Enhanced Scientific Collaboration. The PICES BECI Science Director attended SC10 (Nagoya) to present the work and identify opportunities to partner with them. The BECI project can support the NPFC by enhancing access to environmental information, facilitating NPFC's coordination with other RFMOs, providing comprehensive environmental information about migratory species, and support the NPFC with developing and implementing its climate workplan.
 - e. *Representation at Annual Meetings PICES*: Representatives of the NPFC (SSC BF-ME Chair, Dr. Rooper, Executive Secretary, Dr. Day, and Science Manager, Dr. Zavolokin) participated in PICES-2025 attending the Plenary Session, topic sessions and business meetings of the Science Board, Biological Oceanography Committee (BIO), Fishery Science Committee (FIS) and some business meetings of PICES working groups (such as WGs 43 and 47). Written reports were also provided to PICES Governing Council.
 - f. The Executive Secretary of PICES attended virtually the NPFC's Scientific Committee meeting in December 2025, also giving a presentation on joint activities between the organizations as well as in-person attendance by the Basin-scale Events and Coastal Impacts Science Director who presented updates on the developing science plan and opportunities for NPFC.

Upcoming opportunities

- g. a. *The next PICES annual meeting, PICES-2026, will be held in Nanaimo, Canada on 24-30 October 2026. An NPFC representative will attend the meeting to facilitate the implementation of the Framework for Enhanced Scientific Collaboration in the North Pacific between NPFC and PICES and participate in scientific sessions and business meetings of working groups, committees and science board.*
- h. *The NPFC was invited to co-sponsor the SPF-2026 symposium in La Paz, Mexico on May 4-8, 2026.*

FAO-ABNJ Deep Seas Project

NPFC has been cooperating with FAO and its ABNJ project since the beginning of the Commission and has contributed as one of the project partners. FAO informed project partners that the second phase of the project was approved on 2 June 2020, with USD 5 million for 5 years for the Deep Sea Fisheries (DSF) project and looked forward to the participation of deep-sea RFMOs including NPFC in the second phase of the DSF project which commenced in mid-2022. NPFC, as one of the 7 deep-sea RFMOs, has provided a co-financing (in-kind contribution) partnership letter to join the project as a project partner.

The objective of the DSF project is to ensure that DSF in the ABNJ are managed under an ecosystem approach that maintains demersal fish stocks at levels capable of maximizing their sustainable yields and minimizing impacts on biodiversity, with a focus on data-limited stocks, deepwater sharks and vulnerable marine ecosystems.

The project's Theory of Change summarizes the activities, outputs and outcomes that underpin the project. The successful achievement of the project's objective will require input and support from project partners, in particular the participating RFMOs and industry. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) will take the lead role in supporting the project in the work on data-limited stocks.

FAO presented an update on the key activities and next steps of the ABNJ DSF Project at the SC10 meeting. The DSF Project offered financial support to NPFC and continued to employ an expert to review modalities for incorporating climate change effects into stock assessments of bottom fish. A report on climate change effects on the NPFC bottom fish stocks was presented to SWG NPA-SA in fall 2025.

The DSF Project also partnered with the ICES to assess data-limited stocks, such as SA and NPA, and monitor rapid change and would like suggestions from NPFC of stock experts that would like to join this initiative. NPFC hosted an FAO/ICES workshop on data-limited stock assessments in the NPFC headquarters in Tokyo on 20-24 April 2026.

NPFC representatives participated in the DSF Project's symposium on the "Application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (AEFM) in ABNJ – recent development in the monitoring, assessment and mitigation of ecosystem impacts of fisheries."

The DSF project developed a draft shark ID key to support the implementation of CMM 2023-14 on Sharks. It will continue to work on the ID key and present it at the next SC meeting.

In December 2025, the NPFC and DSF Project held a joint informal workshop on "Science-based management options available for operationalizing the precautionary approach (PA) as outlined in

the Convention for NPFC priority species”. The workshop overviewed international requirements for the application of the PA, reviewed application of the PA to target and bycatch species and marine ecosystems and presented examples from the field, including the NAFO PA framework, GFCM long-term management plans for shrimp and management strategy evaluations and harvest strategies in other FRMOs. Building upon the outcomes of the PA workshop, SC10 recommended that the Commission should develop a general framework for the application of the PA. The SC recommended that this work be conducted by a small working group established under the Commission. The SC also recommended that this small working group be composed of managers and scientists and that it be led by managers.

NPFC provided the venue for the DSF Project Steering Committee meeting that was held in the NPFC headquarters on 17-19 March 2026. ES and SM participated in the meeting.

FAO Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS)

NPFC and FIRMS signed a Partnership Arrangement in 2023. FIRMS aims to facilitate access to a wide range of high-quality web-based information on the status and trends of global marine fishery resources, fisheries and their management. The overall goal of the FIRMS partnership is to provide decision-makers with necessary information to develop effective fisheries policies in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. It was noted that FIRMS does not request any confidential data and works with publicly available information only.

The Science Manager, in cooperation with Secretariat team, provided the necessary information for the FIRMS databases on stocks and fisheries and will continue to update it annually.

IATTC

Based on the COM09 decision and direction from Members, the Secretariat worked with the Secretariat of the Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) to prepare a draft MOU for consideration by the Commission. The proposed text, with edits by Members, is presented in NPFC-2026-COM10-WP10.

SPRFMO

While SPRFMO does not have areas of jurisdictional overlap with NPFC, both RFMO's manage similar fisheries and there are many vessels on the Vessel Registry of both Commissions. Regular discussions occur between the Secretariats and are facilitated by the MOU. The MOU is being considered for renewal in NPFC-2026-COM10-WP09.

WCPFC and ISC

NPFC and WCPFC Secretariats regularly work together on administrative issues under the auspices of the MOU.

International Monitoring, Compliance and Surveillance Network (IMCS) and-Pan Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network (PPFCN)

COM07 accepted the invitation from the IMCS Network – The International Monitoring Control and Surveillance Network (an official observer to NPFC) to join its network in 2023, and the Secretariat has subsequently received considerable support from the Network

The IMCS Network describes itself as “a global community that connects and supports national fisheries agencies and regional fisheries organizations to strengthen fisheries MCS, compliance and enforcement.”

A significant benefit to the NPFC Secretariat in IMCS Network membership is the access to fisheries intelligence and analysis from the Joint Analytical Cell (JAC), of which IMCS Net is a collaborating partner. JAC reports have been particularly helpful in confirming information received about vessels on the IUU Vessel List.

The IMCS Network has developed several practical tools to support cooperation among RFMO Secretariats, including the Combined Regional Authorized Vessel Tool (CRAVT). CRAVT brings together publicly available authorized vessel lists from participating RFMOs into a single, searchable interface. This allows users to quickly: cross-reference vessels across multiple RFMO registries and identify discrepancies.

The IMCS Network’s IUU Vessel Hub is a secure, RFMO-restricted platform designed to help Secretariat staff quickly access verified vessel information. The Hub aggregates **vessel details** that have been confirmed, giving compliance officers a trusted, centralized source rather than requiring them to manually check multiple RFMO lists.

In addition to their collaboration with the JAC, the IMCS Network also hosts several ‘compliance networks’ of compliance managers in RFMO secretariats. The TCN (Tuna Compliance Network) brings together the compliance community from the 5 tuna RFMOs, and the PPFCN (Pan Pacific Fisheries Compliance Network) includes those 5, plus the non- tuna RFMOs in the Pacific Ocean Basin. The Compliance Manager participates in the PPFCN to exchange information on compliance practices and mechanisms for more effective information sharing.

In June 2025, NPFC hosted a combined meeting of TCN/PPFCN at its HQ in Tokyo. The week-

long meeting was a forum for compliance managers to share best practices and discuss topics of mutual interest related to MCS systems and tools.

The IMCS Network will host the 8th Global Fisheries Enforcement Training Workshop (GFETW 8) in August in Bali. GFETW is a biennial workshop bringing together MCS professionals to explore MCS challenges and opportunities. Prior to GFETW 8, IMCS Network will host a face-to-face meeting of TCN/PPFCN. The Secretariat Workplan proposes the NPFC Compliance Manager participate in GFETW 8 and the TCN/PPFCN joint meeting.