



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

CMM 2026-18

(Entered into force 1 June 2026)

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE FOR JAPANESE SARDINE

The North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC),

Recalling that the NPFC has adopted the CMMs as provisional measure on three species – Japanese sardine, neon flying squid and Japanese flying squid – to restrict the number of fishing vessels authorized to fish for such species;

Reaffirming the General Principles provided in Article 3 of the Convention, in particular, Paragraph (h) stipulating that any expansion of fishing effort does not proceed without prior assessment of the impacts of those fishing activities on the long-term sustainability of fisheries resources;

Noting paragraph 1(a) of Article 7 of the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks of 4 December 1995 (hereinafter, “1995 Agreement”), stipulating that the relevant coastal States and the States whose nationals fish for straddling fish stocks in the adjacent high seas area shall seek to agree upon the measures necessary for the conservation of these stocks in the adjacent high seas area;

Recognizing paragraph 2(a) of Article 7 of the 1995 Agreement stipulating that the conservation and management measures adopted and applied in accordance with Article 61 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in respect of the same stocks by coastal States within areas under national jurisdiction and ensure that measures established in respect of such stocks for the high seas do not undermine the effectiveness of such measures;

Recognizing further coastal Members of the Commission have been implementing conservation and management measures for Japanese sardine in areas under their national jurisdiction adjacent to the Convention Area;

Reaffirming paragraph (i) of Article 3 of the Convention, stipulating in accordance with Article 7 of the 1995 Agreement, that conservation and management measures established for straddling fish stocks on the high seas and those adopted for areas under national jurisdiction are compatible in order to ensure conservation and management of these fisheries resources in their entirety;

Noting that the NPFC Catch/Effort statistics show a significant increase in Japanese sardine catches in recent years;

Adopts the following conservation and management measure in accordance with Article 7 of the Convention:

1. Members of the Commission and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCs) with substantial harvest of any of Japanese sardine in the Convention Area shall refrain from expansion, in the Convention Area, of the number of fishing vessels entitled to fly their flags and authorized to fish for such species from the historical existing level until the stock assessment for such species by the SC has been completed.
2. Members of the Commission and CNCs without substantial harvest of Japanese sardine in the Convention Area are encouraged to refrain from expansion, in the Convention Area, of the number of fishing vessels entitled to fly their flags and authorized to fish for such species from the historical existing level until the stock assessment for such species by the SC has been completed.
3. In 2026, each Member of the Commission and CNC with substantial harvest of Japanese sardine shall take necessary measures to ensure that its total annual catch of Japanese sardine in the Convention Area shall not exceed the level of its annual reported catch in 2025.
4. Members of the Commission participating in fishing for the Japanese sardine in areas under their jurisdiction adjacent to the Convention Area are requested to take compatible measures in paragraph 1. Such Members¹ may divert part of their catch limit for areas under their jurisdiction to their own catch of the species in the Convention Area by vessels entitled to fly their flags and authorized to fish for the species, provided that: (i) the Member has established a catch limit for the species in its jurisdiction; (ii) the Member has notified the Commission of the catch limit; and (iii) the total catch of the species in the Convention Area and the areas under their jurisdiction adjacent to the Convention Area will not exceed the Member's total catch limit for its jurisdiction respectively.
5. Development of new fishing activity for Japanese sardine in the Convention Area by Members of the Commission without documented historical catch for such species in the Convention Area shall be determined in accordance with relevant provisions, as appropriate, including but not limited to Article 3, paragraph (h) and Article 7, subparagraphs 1(g) and (h) of the Convention.
6. Members of the Commission and CNCs shall ensure that fishing vessels flying their flag operating in the Convention Area authorized to fish for Japanese sardine are to be equipped with an operational vessel monitoring system that is activated at all times.
7. Members of the Commission and CNCs shall ensure that fishing vessels flying their flag that fish for Japanese sardine in the Convention Area record their catches, including incidental catches of other NPFC species, and any discards and report them to the relevant flag state

¹ Paragraph 4 applies to Russia and Japan

authorities in accordance with their national data recording and reporting requirements.

8. Members of the Commission and CNCPs shall provide their data on Japanese sardine in accordance with the data requirements adopted by the Commission in the Annual Report every year. The Commission shall review such information at the annual meeting of every year.
9. Members of the Commission and CNCPs shall cooperate to take necessary measures including sharing information, in order to accurately understand the situation and eliminate IUU fishing for Japanese sardine.
10. After a stock assessment for Japanese sardine has been completed, the provisions in Paragraph 1 and 3 shall be reviewed by the Commission and those provisions shall not be a precedent to hinder those Members who are not harvesting substantial amounts of Japanese sardine assessed in the Convention Area to develop their own fisheries in the Convention Area noting the Commission shall regularly review the harvests of Japanese sardine in the Convention Area by all Members.
11. This management measure shall expire and be replaced by the measure to be adopted by the Commission based on the advice and recommendations from the Scientific Committee. This management measure enters into force on 1 June 2026 and replaces CMM 2025-11 (for Japanese sardine).