



WWF JAPAN POSITION

April 2024
8th Commission Meeting of the
North Pacific Fisheries
Commission (NPFC):
Osaka, Japan – April 15 – 18,
2024

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) would like to thank the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) for providing the opportunity to attend the 8th 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.

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.

Especially for Pacific saury, 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 saury resources, but also the industries and employment related to it.

As for squid, 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:

- Introduce HCR for Pacific saury at the 8th Commission Meeting in 2024, referring to the results of the estimation by the Small WG.
- 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.

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 which

WWF recommends that the NPFC:

- Introduce catch documentation scheme (CDS) for all target species. The Key Data Elements (KDEs) in the CDS should be harmonized with those of other RFMOs.
- 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 standards of ICCAT and IOTC, where such standards have already been introduced.



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