



**North Pacific Fisheries Commission**

NPFC-2020-SSC PSint01-Summary

**North Pacific Fisheries Commission**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Intersessional Meeting of the Small Scientific Committee on Pacific Saury**  
**2 June 2020**  
**WebEx**  
**Summary**

Agenda Item 1. Opening of the Meeting

1. The 1<sup>st</sup> virtual intersessional meeting of the Small Scientific Committee on Pacific Saury (SSC PS) commenced at 9am on 2 June 2020, Tokyo time (UTC +9 hours) in the format of video conferencing via WebEx. The meeting was attended by Members from Canada, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Chinese Taipei, the United States of America and the Republic of Vanuatu. The Pew Charitable Trusts attended as an observer. The meeting was opened by Dr. Toshihide Kitakado (Japan) who served as the SSC PS Chair.

Agenda Item 2. Introductory items

*2.1 Adoption of Agenda*

2. The agenda was adopted without revision (Annex A). The Participants List is attached (Annex B).

*2.2 Documents available*

3. The Science Manager, Dr. Aleksandr Zavolokin, outlined the meeting arrangements including availability of meeting documents and meeting logistics.

*2.3 Summary of Virtual Meeting*

4. The Science Manager was assigned to draft a summary of discussions at the SSC PS virtual meeting. The meeting summary is to be reviewed by Members after the meeting through correspondence.

Agenda Item 3. Overview of the outcomes of previous NPFC meetings

*3.1 SSC PS05 meeting*

*3.2 Other information*

5. The Chair gave an overview of the outcomes of previous NPFC meetings. The Chair recalled

stock assessment results adopted by SSC PS and SC in April 2019 and informed participants about the revision of CMM for Pacific saury resulted from the stock assessment of Pacific saury. He also outlined the priority issues for the SSC PS and presented the agreed abundance indices and specifications from the SSC PS meeting in November 2019.

#### Agenda Item 4. Fishery-independent abundance indices

##### *4.1 Review of plan of biomass survey in 2020*

6. Japan presented a plan for Japanese fishery-independent survey for Pacific saury in 2020. The survey will be conducted by two research vessels (RV). RV No. 6 Kaiyo Maru will operate west of 155°E from 30 June to 25 July and Hokko Maru will operate in the area between 159° and 175°E from 13 June to 10 July. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Japan replaced one of its research vessels, usually used for this survey, with a smaller vessel. This will result in the reduction of the survey area, specifically the exclusion of the area from 176°E to 165°W.
7. Japan explained the rationale of the estimation of Pacific saury biomass index in 2020 and suggested two options to deal with the reduction of the survey area coverage in 2020, an ad-hoc approach using a correction factor from the past observations and a model-based approach using the VAST model. Japan noted the consistency in trends of total biomass and age-1 biomass and pointed out that the 2020 survey covers the area with the most distribution of age-1 fish.
8. In response to the question of Russia on the potential implications of using another vessel, Japan clarified that the same type of trawl net and the same methods will be used at the survey, thus the catchability of the vessel is expected to remain the same.
9. China commented that a lot of biological and statistical assumptions have to be made to extrapolate the results of the 2020 survey to the whole research area that may result in a lower quality of data. Some preliminary analysis of data is required before using it for stock assessment.
10. Regarding the use of VAST model, Canada suggested attempting other models without a spatial component and also conducting cross-validation by removing some years.
11. Russia informed the participants that it does not plan to conduct a specialized research survey for Pacific saury in 2020.

#### *4.2 Possible use of result from 2020 Japanese biomass survey to update BSSPM*

12. Members recognized the usefulness of the Japanese biomass survey in 2020 for the update of BSSPM and encouraged Japan to explore the approaches for re-calculating fishery-independent abundance index.
13. Japan agreed to submit a meeting document on Japanese survey abundance index by 19 October 2020, one month before the SSC PS meeting.
14. The Chair encouraged Members to cooperate with Japan and work on the Japanese survey abundance index intersessionally through the Collaboration website.

#### *4.3 Other matters*

15. No other matters were discussed.

#### Agenda Item 5. Fishery-dependent abundance indices

##### *5.1 Preparation of standardized CPUE up to 2019 for next stock assessment in November 2020*

16. The Chair proposed to intersessionally update standardized CPUE indices up to 2019 and use them for the next stock assessment of Pacific saury with BSSPM to be concluded in November 2020. The reason is that the CPUE series agreed to use in spring of 2020 assessment was those up to 2018, and therefore it would produce assessment results with 3-year time lag between the data and the report to the Commission meeting planned to be held in early 2021 if the original set of data is kept for next assessment.
17. Most of Members supported the Chair's proposal, while one Member expressed different view on the proposal.
18. Members confirmed the fishery-dependent abundance indices endorsed at the SSC PS05 meeting in November 2019.
19. Members will consider the possibility to update BSSPM during the SSC PS06 meeting in November 2020 based on the availability and quality of the updated standardized CPUE indices up to 2019.

20. Russia raised the issue of a 3-year time lag between data for stock assessment and management implementation, noting the gap this creates and difficulties in use of the data for such a short lived species, consequently, they suggested this issue, seeking methods to narrow the gap between data availability and implementation, be discussed at the next SSC PS meeting.

### *5.2 Quick review of progress on collaborative work for development of joint CPUE*

21. Chinese Taipei updated participants on the progress of intersessional work on the development of a joint CPUE index. Chinese Taipei noted that Japan, Russia and Vanuatu provided monthly 1 by 1 degree data up to 2019 and suggested other Members to submit 2019 data for a joint CPUE index.

22. Chinese Taipei and Korea agreed to submit 2019 data by the end of August 2020. China agreed to submit 2019 data by the end of September 2020.

### *5.3 Other matters*

23. No other matters were discussed.

## Agenda Item 6. Stock assessment using “provisional base models” (BSSPM)

### *6.1 Quick review of BSSPM results based on the data set agreed in SSC PS05*

24. Members had a quick discussion on the BSSPM results based on the data set agreed at the SSC PS05 meeting.

### *6.2 Re-confirmation of BSSPM specification and common data set*

25. Members confirmed the specifications of BSSPM agreed at the SSC PS05 meeting.

26. Members noted that they may consider to use updated abundance indices submitted to the SSC PS06 meeting for the update of BSSPM during the SSC PS06 meeting.

### *6.3 Timeline including data preparation until SSC PS06*

27. Members agreed to submit meeting documents on fishery-independent and fishery-dependent indices in accordance with the template adopted by the SSC PS05 meeting by 19 October 2020, one month before the SSC PS06 meeting.

## Agenda Item 7. Other matters

### *7.1 Biological information*

28. No new information has been presented.

### *7.2 Developing new stock assessment models*

29. There have been no updates on the development of new stock assessment models since the SSC PS05 meeting.

### *7.3 Progress on the data preparation for exploration of new stock assessment models other than existing “provisional base models”*

30. The Science Manager informed participants that Japan, Korea, Russia, Chinese Taipei and Vanuatu had submitted catch-at-size data for Pacific saury in accordance with the format agreed at the SSC PS05 meeting (1 month, 1 by 1 degree, 1 cm). China submitted yearly size composition by 1 cm.

## Agenda Item 8. Workplan

### *8.1 Draft agenda and priority issues for next meeting*

31. The Chair summarized the above intersessional tasks and timelines specified in the paragraphs 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22 and 27.

32. The Chair will update the workplan of the SSC PS intersessionally and present it at the next SSC PS meeting.

33. Members added a new agenda item to the agenda of SSC PS06 meeting: Agenda Item 12.2 “Narrowing the timeline between data availability and management implication”.

### *8.2 Other*

34. No other matters were discussed.

## Agenda Item 9. Close of the Meeting

35. The meeting closed at 12:46pm on 2 June 2020, Tokyo time.

Annex A – Agenda

Annex B – List of participants

## Agenda

Agenda Item 1. Opening of the Meeting

Agenda Item 2. Introductory items

- 2.1 Adoption of Agenda
- 2.2 Documents available
- 2.3 Summary of Virtual Meeting

Agenda Item 3. Overview of the outcomes of previous NPFC meetings

- 3.1 SSC PS05 meeting
- 3.2 Other information

Agenda Item 4. Fishery-independent abundance indices

- 4.1 Review of plan of biomass survey in 2020
- 4.2 Possible use of result from 2020 Japanese biomass survey to update BSSPM
- 4.3 Other matters

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- 5.1 Preparation of standardized CPUE up to 2019 for next stock assessment in November 2020
- 5.2 Quick review of progress on collaborative work for development of joint CPUE
- 5.3 Other matters

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- 6.2 Re-confirmation of BSSPM specification and common data set
- 6.3 Timeline including data preparation until SSC PS06

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- 7.2 Developing new stock assessment models
- 7.3 Progress on the data preparation for exploration of new stock assessment models other than existing “provisional base models”

Agenda Item 8. Workplan

- 8.1 Draft agenda and priority issues for next meeting
- 8.2 Other

Agenda Item 9. Close of the Meeting

## List of participants

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