



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

STATEMENT

by

North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC)

Under the topic of IV. Institutional Arrangements

Thank you Madam President,

Since this is the first time for the NPFC to take the floor, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to you for your leadership and hospitality.

Following NPFC Members' initial intervention on the institutional arrangements in general, I wish to present the status of our current scientific structure for your information.

As you may be aware, the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) is one of the youngest regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) established in 2015 for the conservation and management of high seas fisheries resources in the north Pacific and protection of marine ecosystems in which these resources occur. Negotiation among participating states began in 2006 in compliance with UNGA resolution and went through 9 years to establish a new commission, NPFC.

During the interim period, our Members have discussed to address BBNJ issues through 20 times of the scientific working group (SWG) meetings and as a result, members agreed on interim and voluntary measures for the management of bottom fisheries and protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) in the Seamount area of the North Pacific region. Those measures include closed area, limit the fishing effort, closed season, prohibition of the vessels from engaging in direct fishing on four orders of cold water corals, encounter protocol including move-on rules. With these measures, almost 90% of the NPFC Convention Area has been closed to bottom fisheries and a rigorous exploratory protocol is applied to a new fishery. The exploratory fisheries are to be permitted only where the impact assessment concludes that they would not have significant adverse impacts (SAIs) on marine species or any VMEs.

The scientific working group is now a formal Scientific Committee (SC) which is one of the major components of the NPFC's operation, together with Technical and Compliance Committee, and consists of Small Scientific Committees for VMS (SSC VMS), Bottom Fish (SSC BF), and Pacific saury (SSC PS), and Technical Working Groups for Chub Mackerel Stock Assessment (TWG CMSA) and Pacific Saury Stock Assessment (TWG PSSA). Similar to that in other RFMOs, the main purpose of the SC is to provide best scientific information available to the Commission for decisions on the conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources and protection of marine ecosystems.

To this end, SC meets almost 10 times at face to face meetings annually and discusses outstanding issues through electronically, such as video conference or email correspondence during the intersessional period. Members of the SC are mainly national scientists of NPFC Members with

knowledge and expertise on the marine species and marine ecosystems in the North Pacific Convention Area.

Now, members of the BBNJ ILBI are discussing Scientific/Technical body under the new instrument so we NPFC like other RFMOs with a strong scientific body are ready to cooperate with others to address BBNJ issues in the North Pacific region.

Thank you Madam President for giving me the floor.