

**REPORT OF THE 17th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
POLLOCK RESOURCES IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA
12 November - 21 December 2012**

1. Opening of the Conference

Mr. Bundo Yoon (Republic of Korea) opened the 17th Annual Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea on 12 November 2012. It is the Third Annual Conference to be conducted via electronic mail (e-mail).

2. Opening Statements

Japan, and Poland and the EU submitted their opening statements. (Appendix 1)

3. Elections

3.1 Mr. Bundo Yoon, Director, International Fisheries Organization Division, Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MIFAFF), Korea, was elected as Chair of the Annual Conference. Mr. Jeongseok Park (Republic of Korea) served as Rapporteur. Dr. Inja Yeon (Republic of Korea) served as the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Committee Meeting.

3.2 The following individuals served as the “voice” from each Party for e-mail exchanges: China (no participant), Japan (Tadaaki Kakinua), Republic of Korea (Jeongseok Park), Poland and the EU (Pavlina Nikolova), Russia (Alexander Glubokov), United States (Paul Niemeier) .

3.2 A list of the Annual Conference participants is provided in Appendix 2.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda, as adopted, is provided in Appendix 3.

5. Report of the Scientific and Technical Committee

5.1 The Report of the 17th Scientific and Technical (S&T) Committee Meeting is provided in Appendix 4. The final Report was distributed to the Parties on 19 October 2012.

5.2 Documents submitted for the S&T meeting were distributed to the Parties on 19 October 2012.

6. Action Items

6.1. The review of scientific data and conservation measures of the Coastal States related to pollock fishing in the Bering Sea.

6.1.1 The United States and Russia provided fisheries catch statistics and research cruise results. These were included in the S&T Committee Report.

6.2. Establishment of a Plan of Work for the Scientific and Technical Committee

6.2.1 There were no recommendations for a Plan of Work for the Scientific and Technical Committee.

6.3. Establishment of the Allowable Harvest Level (AHL)

6.3.1 There was no consensus among the Parties on how to set the AHL. Therefore, the process prescribed by Article VII and Part 1 of the Annex to the Convention was followed. Consequently, the Parties agreed that the AHL for 2013 be set at zero.

6.4. Establishment of the Individual National Quotas

6.4.1 Since AHL was set at zero, no individual national quotas could be established.

6.5. Adoption of appropriate conservation and management measures based upon the advice of the Scientific and Technical Committee

6.5.1 There was no action on this item. Conservation and management measures will remain at status quo at this time.

6.6 Establishment of the Terms and Conditions for Trial Fishing in 2013

6.6.1 The Parties agreed to adopt the same terms and conditions for trial fishing in 2013 as agreed to at the 2010 Annual Meeting.

6.6.2 As at past Annual Conferences, the Parties recommended that countries planning to conduct trial fishing give at least one month lead time prior to fishing in order to facilitate enforcement efforts.

6.7. Trial Fishing Plans in 2013

The United States, Korea, Japan and Russia have no plans to conduct trial fishing in 2013. Poland and the EU encourage Parties to the Convention to conduct research cruises in the region in 2013, in order to obtain more scientific data and understanding concerning the distribution and status of the Pollock stock in the Central Bering Sea.

6.8. Measures taken to investigate and penalize violations of the Convention.

No new information was submitted.

6.9. Consideration of matters related to the conservation and management of living marine resources other than pollock in the Convention Area

There was no discussion on this agenda item.

6.10. Meeting Observers

There were no observers.

7. Future Annual Conferences

7.1 Consideration of virtual meetings

7.1.1 The Parties agreed to continue the virtual meeting process for 2013.

. Russia believes that both S&T Committee Meeting and Annual Conference could be shortened significantly and limited to one month. The Party hosting the Annual Conference will inform the Parties about the date of opening S&T Committee two weeks ahead of the start the S&T Committee meeting. The United States supports Russia's proposal to limit the total time allotted for the two meetings to no more than a month.

7.2 18th Annual Conference

7.2.1. The 18th Annual Conference will be hosted by Poland. The rotation pattern at the beginning was different. In the first round of the Conferences China was hosting 5th (in year 2000) Conference before Poland (6th Conference 2001). During the second round China asked to be replaced in 2006 by Poland. Poland agreed, but in our meaning it was only for one year. Poland and the EU prefer to return to the first scheme and that China chairs the Conference in 2013, while Poland and the EU chair in 2014, unless China faces any particular difficulty with that. However, to date China has neither responded to the preference from Poland and EU, nor participated in the 17th Annual Conference. Consequently, Poland and EU expressed their willingness to host the 18th Annual Conference if the Parties have no objection. There was no objection and the United States, Korea and Russia support Poland and EU as the host of the 18th Annual Conference

7.3 Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

7.3.1 According to the Rule 2 of the Annual Conference Rules of Procedure, the Chair of the next Annual Conference shall be from the host Party and the Parties shall elect a Vice-Chair, if necessary. The Parties shall also elect a Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Committee. A vacancy shall be filled by a nominee of the same Party, subject to the approval of the other Parties. As reported in 7.2., Poland and EU will host the 18th Annual Conference and will inform the Parties of the names of the Chair of the S&T Committee Meeting and the 18th Annual Conference in advance of the meetings.

8. Other Issues

The Parties have no other issues to raise.

9. Closing Statements

The United States expresses its appreciation to Korea, especially Mr. Bundo Yoon, Mr. Jeongseok Park, Dr. Inja Yeon, and Dr. Seok-Gwan Choi, for successfully conducting the 17th Annual Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea. The United States remains committed to the virtual meeting process and looks forward to participating in the virtual 18th Annual Conference hosted by Poland and EU in 2013. The U.S. delegation is pleased to offer its support to the host country for this important meeting.

Appendices

1. Opening Statements
2. Delegation List.
3. Plenary Agenda.
4. Report of the Scientific and Technical Committee.

Opening Statement

by Japan

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, on behalf of the Japanese Delegation, I would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Republic of Korea, for hosting the 17th Annual Conference of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea (CBS) in virtual meeting.

We assure our cooperation with Mr. Bundo Yoon, the chair of the conference, throughout this year's virtual meeting to have a fruitful meeting.

On this occasion, we would like to reaffirm Japan's basic position concerning the conservation and management of the Pollock resources.

As is known to every member, it has already been about 20 years since the moratorium on commercial fishing became effective as the most strict measure for conservation of pollock resources in the CBS, where once was harvested more than 1.4 million tons of Pollock at its best season. However it is regrettable that we have not yet found any sign of recovery of the pollock resources in the area.

One of the objectives of the Convention is to restore and maintain the Pollock resources in the Bering Sea at levels which will permit their maximum sustainable yield. However, there is no sign of recovery, and the objective of the Convention has yet to be achieved.

Under the circumstances, the moratorium on fishing activities in the Convention Area continues, and fishermen in Japan, as well as those in other Members have been facing difficulties.

Now, in order to get back to the objectives of the Convention and support our sustainable fishing industry, we have to reiterate the following two points.

First, as Japan has been emphasizing, Members should adopt at the Annual Conference the allowable harvest level (AHL) on a rational scientific basis, even if it is very small. Therefore, it is very important for Members to continue cooperation to the utmost extent in gathering and sharing scientific information, which is vital for the establishment of AHL.

Second and last, Members should take necessary procedures to promptly allow pollock fishing in case that the recovery of pollock resources is recognized.

Thank you.

Opening Statement by Poland and the European Union
17th Annual Conference of the Bering Sea Convention, virtual meeting,
12 November – 21 December 2012

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour and a great pleasure for Poland and the European Union to participate in the Bering Sea Convention Annual Conference in this unusual setting. Following the positive experience of last year, we are convinced that this virtual meeting will be successful and productive and ensure a wide participation of Contracting Parties while limiting unnecessary travel.

As you are well aware, following the accession of Poland to the European Union in 2004, the competence for conservation and management of international fisheries resources has been transferred to the European Union. As we have informed you in the past years, the Union will be seeking to become a party to this Convention in due time.

Poland and the European Union are fully committed to sustainable fisheries management outside EU waters and recognize the key role RFMOs play in the long term conservation and sustainable use of fish stocks. We are equally committed to using the latest scientific advice on the status of stocks as a basis for responsible resource management.

We look forward to participating in this meeting and hope it will be a productive and successful one.

Thank you.

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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
POLLOCK RESOURCES IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA**

**Virtual Meeting hosted by the Republic of Korea
2012**

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No participants

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**Agenda for the
17th Annual Conference of the Parties to the Convention on
the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources
in the Central Bering Sea**

Virtual Meeting hosted by the Republic of Korea
2012

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Opening Statements of the Delegates
3. Elections (Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair of Scientific & Technical Committee, and Rapporteur)
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Report of the Scientific & Technical Committee
6. Action Items
 - 6.1 Review of scientific data and conservation measures of the Coastal States related to pollock fishing in the Bering Sea
 - 6.2 Establishment of a Plan of Work for the Scientific and Technical Committee
 - 6.3 Establishment of the Allowable Harvest Level
 - 6.4 Establishment of Individual National Quotas
 - 6.5 Adoption of appropriate conservation and management measures based upon the advice of the Scientific and Technical Committee
 - 6.6 Establishment of the Terms and Conditions for Trial Fishing
 - 6.7 Trial Fishing Plans for the following year
 - 6.8 Measures taken to investigate and penalize violations of the Convention
 - 6.9 Consideration of matters related to the conservation and management of living marines resources other than Pollock in the Convention Area
 - 6.10 Meeting observers
7. Future Annual Conferences
 - 7.1 Consideration of virtual meetings.
 - 7.2 18th Annual Conference
 - 7.3 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
8. Other Issues
9. Closing Statements