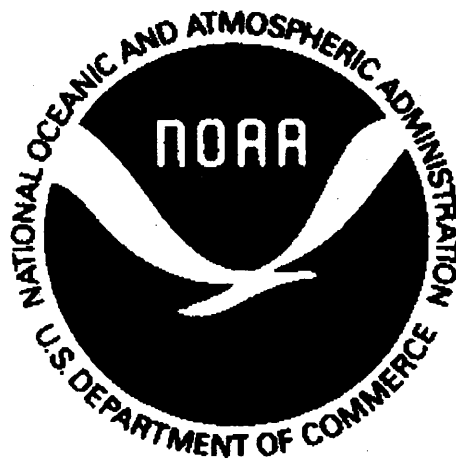
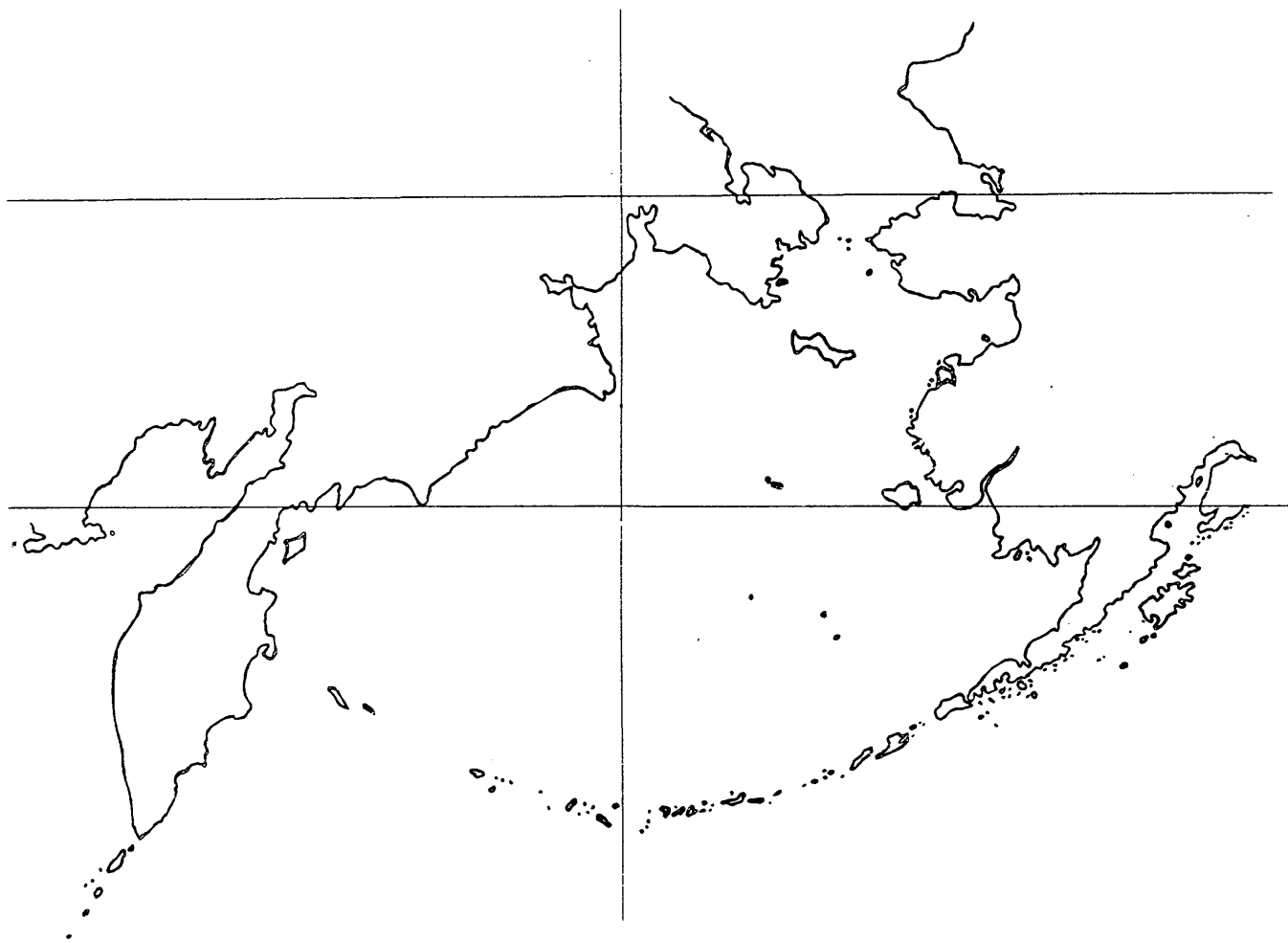


**REPORT OF THE FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION  
ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT  
OF THE POLLOCK RESOURCES IN THE  
CENTRAL BERING SEA**



**1-ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION  
AND MANAGEMENT OF POLLOCK RESOURCES  
IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA.**



**Nov. 13-15, 1996 Moscow, Russia**

**THE FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION  
AND MANAGEMENT OF POLLOCK RESOURCES  
IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA  
(Moscow, November 13-15, 1996)**

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## I.

**INTRODUCTION**

Representative from six countries meeting in Moscow took an unprecedented step forward in developing and fostering cooperation between coastal states and fishing nations in managing living marine resources in the central Bering Sea.

The first meeting of a new international fishery organization, dealing with pollock resources in the central Berig Sea, took place November 13-15, 1996. The six countries that are parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea met to agree on conservation and management measures and to establish procedures through which they will conduct the business of the Convention.

Representative from China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Poland, the Russian Federation, and the United States reviewed scientific information on the status of pollock stocks in the Central Bering Sea, and agreed that there were insufficient data to estimate stock abundance of the stocks. After thorough discussion the parties agreed by consensus that there would be no fishery in the Central Bering Sea again in 1997.

The participants continued to discuss measures by which a fishery in the area would be managed, once stocks of pollock are sufficient to support a fishery. They formed a Scientific and Technical Committee, and they adopted a number of conservation and management measures, anticipating a fishery in the future. This body advise the Annual Conference of the Parties to the Convention on scientific issues, such as observer training and a cooperative research plan, data exchange, and additional monitoring and control measures which will be adopted by the Parties for the conduct of fisheries in the Convention Area.

The USA Delegate offered to convene the Second Annual Conference in November in 1997. This was accepted by the Conference.

## II.

## Agenda

**The First Annual Conference of States - signatories  
to the Convention on Conservation and Management of  
Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea  
(Moscow, November 13-15, 1996)**

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Opening statements and introduction of delegations
3. Elections:
  - Chairman and Vice-Chairman;
  - Appointment of rapporteur
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Development and adoption of the Rules of Procedure
6. Establishment of the Scientific and Technical Committee;  
election of its Chairman.
7. Measures for conservation and management of pollock  
resources in the Convention Area for 1997 as based on the  
advice of the Scientific and Technical Committee.
8. Review of the reports by Parties on measures taken by them  
to investigate infringements of the Convention.
9. Review of matters relating to conservation and management  
of the living resources other than pollock in the  
Convention Area.
10. Second Annual Conference:
  - Time and place
  - Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman
11. Other matters
12. Closing statements
13. Adjournment

III.  
REPORT OF  
THE FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION  
AND MANAGEMENT OF POLLOCK RESOURCES  
IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA

Plenary Session on November 13, 1996

1. Opening of the Conference.

Dr. V.K.Zilanov, Deputy Chairman of the Fisheries Committee of the Russian Federation welcomed on behalf of the Government of the Russian Federation the delegates from the Countries-Parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea, i.e. China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Poland, Russia and the USA. He declared the First Annual Conference of States-signatories to the Convention opened. (The welcoming address is attached).

He then proposed a plan of work, which was adopted by the Conference.

2. Opening statements and introduction of the Delegations.

The head of the USA Delegation, Dr. J.W.Balsiger made a statement (attached) and introduced members of the Delegation.

The head of the Republic of Korea Delegation, Mr. Hak Haing CHO made a statement (attached) and introduced members of the Delegation.

The head of the Chinese Delegation, Mr. Ruifeng FENG made a statement and introduced members of the Delegation.

The head of the Japanese Delegation, Mr. K.Kawaguchi made a statement (attached) and introduced members of the Delegation.

The head of the Polish Delegation, Mr. I.Wojcik made a statement and introduced members of the Delegation.

The head of the Russian Delegation, Dr.V.K.Zilanov made a statement (attached) and introduced members of the Delegation.

The List of Delegates is attached.

3. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman and appointment of rapporteur.

The USA Delegation proposed that Russia, as the host Country, chair the Conference. The Republic of Korea, Chinese, Japanese and Polish Delegations seconded the USA proposal. Dr. V.K. Zilanov was thus elected the Chairman of the Conference. He left the post of the head of the Russian Delegation to Mr. V. G. Fedorenko.

The Japanese Delegation proposed Mr. R. B. Lauber (USA) to be the Vice-Chairman. This proposal was seconded by the Russian Delegation and Mr. R. B. Lauber was thus elected the Vice-Chairman of the Conference.

Dr. V. M. Nikolaev was proposed by the Chairman to serve as the rapporteur, USA, Korea and Japan seconded the nomination and he was thus appointed to serve as the rapporteur.

4. Adoption of the Agenda.

The first draft of the Agenda was distributed to the Parties prior to the Conference. At the first Plenary meeting the Russian Delegation proposed a revised draft, which took into account the results of the Seattle meetings last October and that under Agenda item 6 for the establishment of the Scientific and Technical Committee provided under this proposal, the Scientific and Technical Committee would cover many of the original Agenda items.

The Russian proposal was supported by the USA Delegation. The Japanese Delegation questioned the absence of some Agenda items in the new draft, e.g. "training of observers", suggesting they should not be in the Agenda of the S&T Committee. The Russian Delegation explained that it expected all such items to be dealt with by the S & T Committee.

The Chairman proposed that any matter might be considered under Agenda item 11 "Other Matters", and added that the S&T Committee may consider any matter referred to it by the Plenary, but its recommendations should in any event be approved by the Plenary.

The Japanese Delegation, while expressing its understanding of the explanation, proposed to establish a Working Group on enforcement to work simultaneously with the S&T Committee. This was agreed by the Plenary.

The Polish Delegation expressed its concern over the unusual, specific circumstances relating to Agenda item 6, since usually the Conference should consider the Report of the S&T Committee, the meeting of which should have taken place prior to the Conference. The Chairman agreed that the situation was, indeed, unusual but indicated that unofficial meetings of the informal S&T Committee had, in effect, taken place at Seattle.

It was agreed to adopt the Agenda with the above remarks and reservations being taken into account (attached).

#### 5. Development and adoption of the Rules of Procedure.

The Chairman reminded the Delegates, that at the Seattle meeting draft Rules of Procedure for the Conference and for the S&T Committee have been prepared and met no objection.

The Polish Delegation requested additional time to reflect on the drafts.

The Korean Delegation proposed to add to Rule 6 for the S&T Committee the simultaneous election of Vice-Chairman of the Committee. This proposal was seconded by the US Delegation and adopted by the Plenary.

The Japanese and Polish Delegations stated that the second sentence of Rule 2 for the Conference should be deleted in line with the understanding reached at the Seattle meeting. The Russian Delegation proposed to change the word "hosting" at the end of the third line of the Rule to "expected to host". But the Japanese Delegation objected on the grounds that this wording would still not overcome the difficulty.

The US Delegation proposed to use the relevant wording from the text of Article 6, para 3, of the Convention.

The Chairman noted, that this would be in line with Agenda item 10. But the Japanese Delegation indicated that during previous discussions there was a certain general feeling against the simple repetition of the Convention text. Therefore, they would prefer the first sentence to remain as it was in the draft. The Polish Delegation proposed to start Rule 2 with the text from Article 6, para 3 of the Convention to be followed by the first and third sentences of the present draft. The Japanese Delegation proposed simply to change the present second sentence of the draft to read "The Parties shall also elect the Vice-Chairperson". This was

seconded by the Russian and US Delegations.

The Polish Delegation proposed to clarify the election procedure by adding at the beginning that elections take place at the end of the Conference. The Russian Delegation expressed concern about possible misunderstanding in the future about reasons for using certain parts of the Convention for the Rules while not using the others.

The Plenary adopted the Rules for the Annual Conference with the Japanese modification of Rule 2 and the Korean modification of Rule 5 (attached).

Chairman called for remarks on draft Rules of Procedure for the S&T Committee. Hearing no objections, the Rules were adopted by the Plenary (attached).

6. Establishment of the Scientific and Technical Committee;  
election of its Chairman.

The Russian Delegation brought attention to the Korean amendment to Rule 6 adopted by the Plenary in accordance with which the Vice-Chairman of the S&T Cttee should also be elected. The Chairman agreed and reminded the Delegates of other relevant provisions of the Convention.

The Russian Delegation nominated Dr. B. N. Kotenev to the Cttee.

The Polish Delegation nominated all three members of the Polish Delegation to the Cttee, with Mr. Wojcik as the chief representative.

The Japanese Delegation nominated Dr. K. Wakabayashi.

The Chinese Delegation nominated Prof. Ying Qi Zhou and Prof. Tani-Ji-San.

The Korean Delegation nominated Mr. W. S. Yang.

The US Delegation nominated Mr. Loh-Lee Iow.

The Russian Delegation proposed Dr. R. Marasco to be elected Chairman of the Cttee. This was seconded by the Polish, Chinese, Japanese and Korean Delegations. Dr. R. Marasco was elected Chairman of the S&T Cttee.

For the Vice-Chairman the US Delegation proposed nomination of Dr. K. Wakabayashi from Japan, this was seconded by Poland, Russia, Korea and China. Thus Dr. K. Wakabayashi was elected Vice-Chairman of the S&T Cttee.

The Chairman noted that item 7 of the Agenda is of major importance under the Convention and brought attention to the Suggested Agenda of the S&T Cttee by Russian and US Parties, which, hopefully, would facilitate the Cttee in the provision of its advice to the Conference. He indicated the proposed separation of tasks between the Science WG and the Enforcement WG within the S&T Cttee.

The Polish Delegation again referred to its previous observation on the unusual circumstances of the S&T Cttee meeting this year and proposed for the S&T Cttee to meet in the afternoon today and in the morning session tomorrow, November 14, so as to report to the Plenary at its afternoon meeting at 3.00 p.m.

The Japanese Delegation again requested clarification of functions of the S&T Cttee regarding the enforcement matters, stating that such matters should be handled by a separate body which could be an informal WG, operating independently from the S&T Cttee, whose term of reference were indicated in the Convention.

The Chairman explained that the Science WG and the Enforcement WG would work simultaneously and separately from one another, and that their existence does not contradict to the Convention (article 9, para 5).

The Russian Delegation indicated that both approaches, i.e. two separate WGs or a single S&T Cttee, were acceptable to them to facilitate the subject.

The Japanese Delegation reserved its interpretation of Article 9, para 5, and proposed to hold two separate meetings, since they required different expertise.

The Chairman agreed with this proposal, since it met with no objections from other Delegations.

The Polish Delegation requested clarification on whether it would be two separate WGs or whether they would operate within the framework of the S&T Cttee.

The Chairman referred to evident differences in the interpretation of Article 9, para 5 of the Convention. But, in order to facilitate the work of the Conference, it might be wise for the moment not to insist on the definition of the status of the Enforcement WG.

But the Polish Delegation insisted on the clarification of the formal status of the Enforcement WG.

The US Delegation proposed that both WGs operate under the

auspices of the S&T Cttee.

The Russian Delegation clarified that under the Convention the Annual Conference was the sole and the only formal body entitled to make decisions on recommendations prepared for it by supplementary working bodies. Provisions of the Convention indicate that the S&T Cttee deals with management, which in itself include enforcement, monitoring and control. Therefore, operation of both WGs under the auspices of the S&T Cttee does not contradict to the Convention.

The Chairman indicated that only the Plenary was in the position to empower the S&T Cttee to deal with certain matters and proposed to reconvene the Plenary in the afternoon of November 14 suspending the final decision on the subject under discussion for the time being.

#### **Plenary session on November 14, 1996**

The Plenary was reconvened at 4.00 p.m. on November 14, 1996.

The Chairman of the S&T Cttee Dr. R. Marasco, reported on the progress achieved by the Cttee. He expressed his belief that the work could be finalized by the evening. Preliminary reports of the Science Group and the Enforcement Group have been considered and modified by the Committee. After modified reports are printed and distributed for consideration by the members of the S&T Cttee, the Chair will be in a position to report to the Plenary.

The Chairman of the Conference proposed to the Delegates that the S&T Cttee should finish its work and report to the Plenary at 9.30 a.m. on November 15, 1996 and this was agreed upon.

He then reported to the Delegates about inquiries from press-media about the results of the Conference and suggested that a short press-release should be prepared. The US and Russian Delegations supported this proposal, indicating that it should not necessarily be too detailed. The Plenary agreed to it.

#### **Plenary session on November 15, 1996**

The Plenary was reconvened at 9.30 a.m. on November 15, 1996.

7. Measures for conservation and management of pollock

resources in the Convention Area for 1997 as based on the advice of the Scientific and Technical Committee.

The Chairman of the Conference gave the floor to the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Committee, Dr. R. Marasco. Dr. R. Marasco presented the Report, indicating that the Committee agreed to initially discuss Agenda items 7-9 in the context of a recommendation on an allowable harvest level (AHL) for the Central Bering Sea for the 1997 fishing year. Upon completion of the above discussion the Committee entertained a broader deliberation of the issues under each of these Agenda items and of those stemming from the report of the Science Group meeting and the report of the Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance Experts Group Meeting. These reports are attached to the Report of the Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Committee (13-14 November 1996, Moscow) which, in turn, is annexed to the Report of the First Annual Conference.

The US Delegation inquired about the S&T Cttee estimate of the Aleutian Basin pollock biomass. Dr. R. Marasco replied that there were insufficient data to estimate the biomass. Replying to a further question he indicated that results of the Polish trial fishing in 1995 and those of the Korean survey gave ground to believe that the biomass did not exceed 1.6 mln. tons.

On the basis of the S&T Cttee recommendation the Conference approved the reports of the Science Group, Enforcement Group and Procedures Group. The Report of the S&T Cttee as a whole was also approved by the Conference with the Korean Delegation's addition of the word "Korea" to the first line of para 7.b.ii of the Report.

The US Delegation noted that the AHL for 1996 was zero and that the S&T Cttee believed that the biomass was at a low level and proposed that the AHL for 1997 was set at zero. The Russian Delegation seconded the motion.

The Japanese Delegation stated that for any level of the stock abundance there should be the corresponding AHL. Therefore, even for a low level there should be a certain AHL. For nearly five years Japanese fishermen were abstaining from fishing for pollock in the Central Bering Sea and they would be disappointed if even a low AHL were not set by the Conference. However, the Japanese Delegation agreed that the Conference could establish the AHL for 1997 at zero, requesting that a certain AHL for 1998 shall be established by consensus at next Annual Conference.

The Chinese Delegation agreed that the Conference could establish the AHL for 1997 at zero. However, the Delegation hoped that the concerns, expressed by the Japanese Delegation, could be taken into account.

The Polish Delegation expressed different interpretation of the biomass abundance and possible AHL from the USA Delegation. Taking into account the Polish fishing industry position the Polish Delegation shared the concerns expressed by the Japanese Delegation. However, in order to reach the consensus at the Conference, the Polish Delegation would not object to the zero AHL for 1997.

The Korean Delegation shared the Japanese Delegation opinion and believed that because of the economic situation a low AHL should be considered. The Chairman inquired whether the Korean Delegation shared the emerging general consensus and the Delegation replied positively.

The Chairman summarized that the AHL for 1977 is set at zero by consensus, on the basis of available scientific data. Simultaneously he drew attention to the necessity to improve the data base for abundance in order to meet the concerns expressed by the Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Polish Delegations.

The Russian Delegation presented a joint Russian-USA proposal on trial fishing for pollock in 1997:

**"Measures adopted pursuant to the Convention on the  
Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the  
Central Bering Sea**

**Trial Fishing for Pollock in 1997**

**1730 14 November 1996**

p.7 Measures for conservation and management of pollock resources in the Central Bering Sea for 1997.

Taking into account the recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Committee on the status of pollock resources in the Aleutian basin and the continuing decline in its biomass, the First Annual Conference decided, as follows:

7.1. Continue suspension of fishing for pollock in the Convention Area.

7.2. Conduct trial fishing in the Convention Area.

No more than two vessels from each Party to the Convention at

any time may conduct trial fishing for pollock in the Convention Area. Information on the vessels that will engage in the trial fishing will be provided to all States concerned before trial fishing begins. Parties conducting trial fishing shall notify the other Parties regarding the schedule of such trial fishing with sufficient notice to facilitate the import embarkation and disembarkation of observers. Such vessels will have Scientific Observers of the flag-State on board and will accept Scientific Observers of other Parties to the Convention in accordance with arrangements to be made between them. All provisions of the Convention and all measures adopted at this Annual Conference regarding boarding and inspections, vessel monitoring systems, entry and transshipment notifications, safe boarding ladder standards, and shipboard logs and records shall govern such trial fishing".

The Japanese Delegation indicated that the proposal is acceptable in principal, but made modification to the line in the second paragraph containing reference to the "and the continuing decline in its biomass", since in 1995 the biomass was not in decline, proposing to delete those words.

The Russian Delegation responded that it would be proper to delete the reference to the "continuing", but to retain the reference to the "decline in its biomass", since this corresponded to the actual situation.

The Japanese Delegation indicated that its earlier agreement to the consensus was not necessarily based on the S&T Cttee opinion on the declining biomass. The Polish Delegation supported this opinion indicating that the S&T Cttee Report contained no indication of the declining biomass, it simply stated that data were insufficient.

The US Delegation proposed the sentence to read "Taking into account the report of the Scientific and Technical Committee on the status of pollock resources in the Aleutian basin, the First Annual Conference decided, as follows:"

The Polish Delegation indicated that the terms and conditions for trial fishing operations for 1997 should be elaborated by the Working Group, and those prepared so far are only of the temporary character, pending final recommendations. Therefore, measures mentioned in the last sentence of para 7.2 of the proposal were applicable only to commercial fishing vessels, and not to those

engaged in trial fishing in 1997.

The US Delegation indicated that under the provisions of Article X, para 4 trial fishing should be conducted in accordance with research plans which had to be reviewed and approved by the Annual Conference. Since this was not done this year, the presence of observers became of vital importance.

The Polish Delegation indicated that the measures adopted for trial fishing would be observed by Polish vessels. But as a matter of principle, the Delegation insisted that the Report of the Conference should contain its opinion, that measures elaborated for commercial fishing vessels were not applicable to vessels conducting trial fishing. The Delegation furthermore stated that Article X, para 4 contained logical mistakes, since such procedure was nearly impossible to follow in practice.

The Chairman of the Conference responded that since trial fishing was conducted by a limited number of vessels, practical difficulties could be overcome and the provisions of the Convention followed.

8. Review of the Reports by Parties on measures taken by them to investigate infringements of the Convention.

The Polish Delegation proposed to hear about scientific data and measures for conservation and management of pollock resources taken by the Coastal States, as provided for in Article IV, para 1, item j.

The Japanese Delegation supported this proposal, and referring to the statement made at the signing of the Convention, indicated that the Parties to the Convention were entitled to know whether the Coastal States were applying compatible measures within their EEZs to pollock resources.

The Chairman reminded the Delegates that the Coastal States scientific data have been presented to the S&T Cttee. The second remark of the Japanese Delegation related to the compatibility of measures.

The US Delegation reported that for several years there was a prohibition for directed fishing for pollock in the Bogoslof area.

The Russian Delegation, referring to the Polish and Japanese requests, stated that, formally, there was no corresponding item in the Agenda. But, actually, the data requested have been presented

to the S&T Cttee in writing. Briefly, all measures applied to pollock of the Aleutian Basin stock within the Russian EEZ were compatible with those adopted for the Central Bering Sea.

The Chairman summarized that no infringements were recorded in 1996, and that both USA and Russia were intending to continue the suspension of the fishery for the stock in 1997.

9. Review of matters relating to conservation and management of the living resources other than pollock the Convention Area.

The Russian Delegation reminded the Delegates that Russia planned to convene a symposium on this matter at Magadan in 1997, where it would be more appropriate to discuss this matter thoroughly.

10. Second Annual Conference Time and Place.

The US Delegation offered to host the Second Annual Conference in November 1997 in the USA, the exact dates and venue to be offered through diplomatic channels. The Conference gratefully accepted the offer.

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Russian Delegation proposed, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, that the Chairperson of the Conference should be from the country, hosting the next Conference, and nominated Dr. R.B. Lauber. The motion was seconded by the Korean Delegation, and Dr. Lauber was elected the Chairman of the Second Annual Conference.

Regarding the Vice-Chairman, the Chairman of the Conference reminded about the good practice of electing a person from the next but one host country. He inquired whether any Party had plans to host the Third Annual Conference.

The Chairman then proposed, that, since Japan planned, tentatively, to host the Third Annual Conference, Mr. K. Kawaguchi be elected the Vice-Chairman. The Conference adopted this proposal.

11. Other matters.

The Polish Delegation asked about when Russia, in accordance

with Article IV, para 2, planned to publish all conservation and management measures in force in the Convention Area.

The Chairman indicated that the major measure was the AHL for 1997, plus other measures included in the Report of the S&T Committee.

The US Delegation raised the matter of the participation by NGOs. Expressing its concern over this unresolved issue, the Delegation informed that it would circulate a note on the subject matter prior to the Second Annual Conference.

### 12. Closing statements.

The US Delegation made a closing statement (attached), and invited the Parties to the Second Annual Conference in the USA in 1997.

The Japanese Delegation joined the US Delegation in the expressions of gratitude. It expressed its disappointment in the failure by the Conference to adopt some AHL for 1977, and expressed the hope that the situation would be different at the Second Annual Conference.

The Korean, Polish, Russian and Chinese Delegations supported the opinions expressed about the importance of decisions taken at the Conference and joined other Delegations in the expressions of gratitude to the Chairman of the Conference, Chairman of the C&T Committee, and Chairmen of WGs.

Before adjourning the Conference the Chairman read out draft Press-release. After some discussion, the Conference approved the Press-release (attached) and authorized the Chairman to release it to the press.

### 13. Adjournment.

The First Annual Conference was adjourned at 3.00 p.m. on November 15, 1966.

## IV.

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF  
THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

13-14 November 1996  
Moscow, Russia

Parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea (the Convention) established the Scientific and Technical (S&T) Committee on 13 November 1996. Dr. Richard Marasco (United States) and Dr. Kiyoshi Wakabayashi (Japan) were elected Chair and Co-chair, respectively.

**1. Opening Remarks**

In his opening comments, the Chair reiterated the charge given to the S&T Committee by the Conference Chairman, i.e., to (1) review and update the status of pollock resources in the central Bering Sea and (2) develop recommendations for addressing the conservation and management of those pollock resources. The parties were given an opportunity to present opening statements and introduce their delegations. A list of participants is provided at Attachment 1.

**2. Appointment of Rapporteur**

Mr. Paul Niemeier (United States) was appointed rapporteur for the meeting.

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

Participants adopted the agenda shown in Attachment 2. The Chair proposed, and the participants agreed, to initially discuss agenda items 7-9 in the context of a recommendation on an allowable harvest level (AHL) for the central Bering Sea for the 1997 fishing year. Participants also agreed that, upon completion of the above discussion, they would entertain a broader deliberation of the issues under each of these agenda items.

**4. Report from Science Group**

Dr. Loh-Lee Low (United States) presented to the S&T Committee the report of the Science Group Meeting held on 9-11 October 1996, in Seattle (Attachment 3). Dr. Low briefly summarized the major issues discussed at the meeting: the updating of catch and effort statistics for Bering Sea pollock resources, results of trial fishing in the central Bering Sea, results of 1996 research cruises, a review and update of the status of Aleutian Basin pollock stock, Parties' cooperative research plans for 1996-1997, and the status of the observer training program.

Regarding the issue of cooperative research plans for 1996-1997, the representative from Korea noted that Korea would probably employ the *R/V PUSAN 851* for an echo integration-trawl survey in the Aleutian Basin, including the Bogoslof Island area, in 1997.

The Committee adopted the report.

#### **5. Report from Enforcement, Monitoring, and Control Group**

Captain J. Vincent O'Shea (United States) presented the report of the Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance Experts Group Meeting held on 9-11 October 1996, in Seattle (Attachment 4). Captain O'Shea summarized the work accomplished by this group since its first meeting in February 1995. To date, the parties have provisionally adopted the following documents: Boarding and Inspection Manual, Entry/Transshipment Notification Procedures, Minimum Standards and Specifications for Shipboard Vessel Monitoring System Equipment, and Safe Boarding Ladder Standards. Delegations also approved at the Experts Meeting in October 1996, the following documents: Appropriate Government Authorities to Receive Entry and Transshipment Notifications, Boarding Checklist, Report of Inspection, Inspection Questionnaire, and Minimum Standards and Specifications for Shipboard Logs and Records. Regarding Shipboard Logs and Records, all parties should submit their flag-State's logs to facilitate Observer training prior to the scheduled training session. In addition, the Duties of an Article XI Observer will be included in the Central Bering Sea Observer Program. (This recommendation was subsequently withdrawn in agenda item 8.b.) Poland reserved the position that a List of Master/Observer Cooperation be developed at a future date.

Delegations approved the document "Circumstances Related to Interference with an Observer" with the provision that the United States provide a revised proposal for consideration by the parties at the First Annual Conference. The United States provided such a revised proposal.

The major outstanding issue is that of a management system for the central Bering Sea. The United States and Japan have submitted proposals for consideration by the parties.

Captain O'Shea urged that the S&T Committee recommend to the parties at the First Annual Conference that the monitoring, control, and surveillance measures developed to date be formally adopted and that the Group meet in the near future to resolve remaining issues.

The Committee adopted the report.

#### **6. Report from Procedures Group**

Mr. Jonathan Pollard (United States) reported that the last meeting of the Rules of Procedure Experts' Group was in November 1995 at the Meeting of the States Signatories to the Convention. The Group developed Rules of Procedure for the Annual Conference and the S&T Committee, which were provisionally adopted at that meeting and formally adopted by the parties at this First Annual Conference. Mr. Pollard reported that the remaining issue to be resolved is the participation by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Annual Conferences and meetings of the S&T Committee.

The Committee adopted the report.

## **7. Discussion of Issues from Science Group**

### **7.a. Determination of Allowable Harvest Level (AHL)**

The Science Group engaged in a lengthy discussion, but could not arrive at a consensus with respect to an annual harvest specification. The Chair summarized the discussions, stating that the United States and Russia supported the conclusions that the AHL should be zero. Among the other parties, Japan, Korea, and Poland disagreed with this conclusion. China proposed a compromise (Attachment 5), which was supported in principle by Poland, Russia, and the United States. Unfortunately, the Group was still unable to reach a consensus.

### **7.b. Work Plan for 1997**

#### **7.b.i. Data Exchanges**

The U.S. representative stated that there is currently in place a process for data submission and that the United States is the repository for such data. He recommended that this process continue. All parties agreed.

#### **7.b.ii. Trial Fishing Plans**

Contingent on the AHL being zero for 1997, Poland, China, Japan, and Korea expressed their intention to conduct trial fishing in the central Bering Sea. The S&T Committee supports these requests.

#### **7.b.iii. Cooperative Research Plans**

The United States reported that it had received plans from several parties (the United States, Japan, Korea, and Russia). None of the parties involved reported changes in the plans presented at the Experts Meeting in Seattle. China, Poland and Korea expressed interest in placing scientists on the U.S. *R/V MILLER FREEMAN*.

The United States emphasized the importance of gaining access for the *R/V MILLER FREEMAN* to continue its survey tracks into the Navarin Basin area, in order to fully assess the distribution of pollock stock resources.

#### **7.b.iv. Observer Training Program**

The United States offered to host an observer training program on March 24-29, 1997, in Seattle. All parties expressed an interest in participating, and the United States agreed to contact parties by fax in the immediate future. Detailed information on each participant will be requested, and this information should be provided by 1 December 1996.

### **7.b.v. Symposium**

The Russian delegation reported that information on the Symposium on the Status and Dynamics of Pollock Stocks and Other Living Marine Resources in the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea would be provided by fax to all parties in mid-December. The current plan is to hold this symposium in Magadan in July or August 1997.

### **7.c. Other Issues**

Poland noted that, according to the Rules of Procedure for the S&T Committee, the Committee shall prepare a preliminary agenda for the next annual meeting. A working group was formed to prepare the agenda (shown at Attachment 6). The agenda was approved by the Committee.

Korea proposed that the Science Group meet sixty days in advance of the Annual Conference, in order to provide time for the parties to prepare a report for the Annual Conference. Some parties noted that, if this meeting is held too early, data from research cruises may not be available.

The S&T Committee formed two groups under its auspices, the Science Group and the Enforcement Group, to carry on the work of the groups previously known as the Science Experts Group and the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Experts Group, respectively. Japan maintains its reservation on the interpretation of the nature of the functions to be carried out by the S&T Committee.

## **8. Discussion of Issues from Working Group on Enforcement, Monitoring and Control**

a. The Enforcement Group reviewed the issue of trial fishing for Pollock in 1997 if the AHL is zero, and discussed the difficulty in submitting a research plan for trial fishing in 1997. Some of the parties expressed a desire to conduct trial fishing operations in 1997 without having a research plan ready at the Annual Conference. Some of the parties expressed the necessity that, consistent with Article X, paragraph 4 of the Convention, there are terms and conditions, including monitoring and compliance, which should be applied if trial fishing for pollock in 1997 is authorized at the Annual Conference. These terms and conditions could be developed by the Annual Conference or the Conference could task this working group with their development.

b. In view of the discussion of the S&T Committee earlier today, the Enforcement Group withdrew its recommendation of adopting the document "Duties of an Article XI Observer."

c. The Enforcement Group briefly discussed the Central Bering Sea Observer Program and recommends that the S&T Committee report on the status of the draft of that program. It was suggested that a working group composed of members of the Science and Enforcement Groups be formed to resolve this issue.

d. The Enforcement Group also recommends that it hold an intersessional meeting in Seattle, Washington, USA, during February or March 1997 to continue its work on other issues.

e. Agenda items 8.a.-8.d. were deferred to a later meeting due to time constraints.

## **9. Discussion of Issues from Procedures Group**

### **9.a. Participation of NGOs**

The issue of NGO participation was deferred to the Annual Conference for discussion.

### **9.b. Other Issues**

There were no other issues.

## **10. Other Matters and Recommendations**

### **10.a. Meeting Schedules for the Science Group and the Enforcement Group for 1997...Time and Place**

Poland offered to host the Science Group meeting in August 1997, tentatively at the Sea Fisheries Institute in Gdynia. The date and location of the meeting will be confirmed once the Polish delegation has returned to Poland.

The United States will host an intersessional meeting of the Enforcement Group in Seattle, Washington, during February or March 1997, to allow the Group to continue its work on other important issues.

### **10.b. Other Matters**

The S&T Committee discussed the role of Article XI observers. It concurred on the need for validated catch data, which is critical to the assessment and management of Central Bering Sea pollock resources. The Committee failed to resolve the matter.

## **11. Report to the Annual Conference**

The S&T Committee formally adopted the Reports of the Science Group, Enforcement Group, and Procedures Group. The Committee recommends that Parties at the Annual Conference approve these three reports.

## **12. Closing Comments**

There were no closing comments.

## Attachment 1

**PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING OF  
THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

13-14 November 1996  
Moscow, Russia

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Executive Secretary  
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Mr. Earl W. COMSTOCK  
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Mr. Richard B. LAUBER  
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American Factory Trawlers Association

Mr. J. Trevor MCCABE  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate

Mr. Henry V. MITCHELL  
U.S. Advisor  
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**Science and Technical Committee Meeting  
13-14 November 1996  
Moscow, Russia**

**Suggested Agenda  
by Russian and U.S. Parties**

Revised 1415 13 November 1996

1. Opening Remarks
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
  
4. Report from Science Group
5. Report from Enforcement, Monitoring, and Control Group
6. Report from Procedures Group
  
7. Discussion of Issues from Science Group
  - a. Determination of Allowable Harvest Level (AHL)
  - b. Work Plan for 1997
    - i. Data Exchanges
    - ii. Trial Fishing Plans
    - iii. Cooperative Research Plans
    - iv. Observer Training Program
    - v. Symposium
  - c. Other Issues
  
8. Discussion of Issues from Working Group on Enforcement, Monitoring, and Control
  - a. Circumstances Related to Interference with an Observer
  - b. Vessel Operator/Master Responsibilities
  - c. Observer Responsibilities
  - d. Management Issues
  - e. Other Issues
  
9. Discussion of Issues from Procedures Group
  - a. Participation of NGOs
  - b. Other Issues
  
10. Other Matters and Recommendations
  - a. Meeting Schedules for the Science Group and Enforcement Group for 1997.....Time and Place
  - b. Other Matters
  
11. Report to the Annual Conference
  
12. Closing Comments

**EXPERTS MEETING OF THE PARTIES SIGNATORIES TO THE  
CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
POLLOCK RESOURCES IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA**

**Report of the Science Group Meeting**

October 9-11, 1996

Regional Center, Building 9, Rooms A and B  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
7600 Sand Point Way Northeast  
Seattle, Washington

The group elected Loh-Lee Low (USA) as chairman of the meeting, and Taina Honkalehto (USA) was appointed as rapporteur.

Attached to this report are (1) the revised agenda of the meeting, (2) a list of participants and (3) a list of reports distributed at the meeting.

### **5.1 Update catch and effort statistics**

The Science Group reviewed the summary table of Alaska pollock catch by area. A request was made for any corrections to be submitted and discussion was tabled until later in the meeting when a new table with the most current information would be compiled and presented. The individuals responsible for each member nation's data are : T. Qisheng, China; K. Wakabayashi, Japan; L. J. Uk, R.O.K.; V. Pashchenko, Russia; J. Janusz, Poland; W. Karp, US. Data should be transferred to V. Weststad, US.

A revised table including data from 1981-1996 on Alaska pollock catch by area with detailed Aleutian Basin catch by sub-area was prepared (Attachment 1).

### **5.2 Present results on trial fishing**

Poland presented their results on trial fishing in international waters of the Bering Sea in 1995 (Attachment 2). Two vessels were involved between October 18 and November 12, 1995. The results were discussed. Trial fishing by one vessel in 1996 was completed recently; no results are available.

### **5.3 Review results of 1996 research cruises**

The US presented results from the echo integration-trawl survey of pollock in the southeastern Aleutian Basin near Bogoslof Island during February - March 1996 (Attachment 3). One set of transects was made through the area during the time period anticipated to be just prior to peak

spawning. The biomass estimate was lower than that from 1995; 95% confidence intervals surrounding estimates from the two years nearly overlapped. Population at length data were presented, but age information will not be available until later in the year. Questions were raised about the large fluctuation in estimated mean biomass for the area between 1994 and 1996.

The group discussed potential causes of the variability in the Bogoslof biomass estimates over the last three years (0.49, 1.10 and 0.68 million metric tons for 1994, 1995, and 1996, respectively from U.S. surveys). It was suggested that acoustic sampling variation (i.e. confidence interval of the biomass estimate) and/or potential trawl sampling bias could account for a significant portion of the changes. The contribution from biological sources of variability is unknown. Potential biological sources of variability include, among others, variable recruitment of year classes of pollock from the shelf, different rates of return of spawners to the Bogoslof area, and interannual increase or decrease in Aleutian Basin pollock mortality.

Japan presented cruise results of winter 1996 Bering Sea pollock survey (*Kaiyo maru*) (Attachment 4). Intership calibration with the *Miller Freeman* showed that when some leading ship problems were accounted for, acoustic data were comparable between the two vessels. The cruise was conducted in two legs with time periods bracketing the time of the U.S. survey, and included the Bogoslof area and the eastern Aleutian Basin. Biomass estimates for Legs 1 and 2 were .391 and .439 million metric tons, respectively.

The Republic of Korea presented a report of the 1996 echo integration and midwater trawl survey for Bering Sea walleye pollock by the *R/V Pusan 851* (Attachments 5 and 6). Three areas were surveyed between May 13 and 31, 1996; a) Bogoslof area b) Aleutian Basin west of the Bogoslof area to the Donut Hole and c) the Donut Hole.

#### 5.4 Review and update status of the Aleutian Basin stock

##### A. Update of relative and absolute abundance estimates of pollock in the Aleutian Basin.

Based on all available information, including a series of Aleutian Basin surveys, a series of Bogoslof surveys, and recent CPUE information from the Donut Hole area, biomass of pollock in the eastern and central Aleutian Basin is fairly low (Table 1). In the western Aleutian Basin, information on pollock biomass is sparse. The group agreed that more information should be obtained about pollock abundance in the western Aleutian Basin.

##### B. Biomass in the area identified in Annex 1(b).

Four estimates of the abundance of pollock in the Annex 1(b) area in 1996 were presented (Table 2). These direct estimates were made from data collected during echo integration-trawl surveys

in 1996 in the Bogoslof Island area by the Republic of Korea, the United States and Japan. Documents presented by the delegations with details on results and methodology are attached to this report.

Table 1. Aleutian Basin pollock biomass estimates (see Figure 1)

<u>Absolute Abundance estimates:</u>	insufficient information to estimate biomass
<u>Relative Abundance estimates:</u>	Bogoslof survey series (Japan <sup>1</sup> , U.S. <sup>2</sup> ) -- low abundance Aleutian Basin series (Korea <sup>3</sup> , Japan <sup>1</sup> ) -- low abundance (eastern and central part of the Aleutian Basin) Donut Hole CPUE (Poland <sup>4</sup> ) -- low abundance

Table 2. Annex 1(b) Area pollock biomass estimates

<u>Estimate No.</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Nation</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimate<sup>5</sup></u>
-- 1--	Feb. 13-25, 1996	Japan	Leg 1, pre-spawning	391,000 t <sup>6</sup>
-- 2--	Feb. 25-Mar 8, 1996	U.S.	near-spawning	582,000 t
-- 3--	Mar. 6- 12, 1996	Japan	Leg 2, spawning	439,000 t <sup>6</sup>
-- 4--	May 13-17, 1996	R. O. K.	after spawning	28,790 t

## 5.5 Cooperative Research plans

Japan presented a cruise plan for midwater trawl survey on pelagic pollock in the International waters of the Bering Sea, 1996 (Attachment 7). Planned survey dates are Nov. 1-24, 1996. Acoustic information using a non-quantitative echo sounder will be used to indicate fish presence, not to estimate biomass.

<sup>1</sup> Cruise results of the winter 1996 Bering Sea pollock survey (*Kaiyo maru*).

<sup>2</sup> Walleye pollock (*Theragra chalcogramma*) abundance in the southeastern Aleutian Basin near Bogoslof island during February-March, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the 1996 echo integration and midwater trawl survey for the Bering Sea walleye pollock by the *R/V Pusan 851*, and a table entitled "Estimated biomass by year of walleye pollock during the echo integration trawl survey *R/V Pusan 851* in the Bering Sea".

<sup>4</sup> Report on Polish fishing trial operations on pollock in the international waters of the Bering Sea in 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Estimates may not include entire Annex 1(b) area.

<sup>6</sup> Biomass estimate using narrow beam transducer data.

Japan also outlined the research plan of the *Kaiyo maru* cruise in 1997. Tentative dates are May 20 - Jul 5 (Attachment 8). It will be the 3rd survey on larval and juvenile walleye pollock in the Bering Sea.

The US outlined its research plans for 1997 (Attachment 9). They include: 1) a spawning pollock survey in the southeastern Aleutian Basin between Feb. 28- March 11, 1997 (*Miller Freeman*), 2) A summer echo integration-trawl survey of pollock on the eastern Bering Sea shelf. Tentative dates are July 15-Sept.15 (*Miller Freeman*), 3) a Bering Sea shelf bottom trawl survey (2 charter vessels), 4) an Aleutian Islands bottom trawl survey (2 charter vessels) and 5) various FOCI/ Southeastern Bering Sea Carrying Capacity program cruises. The most recent information about this cruise and about the *Miller Freeman* schedule can be obtained from web sites (see Attachment 9).

The Republic of Korea indicated it would probably employ the *R/V Pusan 851* for an echo integration -trawl survey in the Aleutian Basin in 1997. A survey plan will be forwarded to members of the Science Group as plans become finalized.

Russia is planning 2 surveys in 1997. The first will be an ichthyoplankton and echo integration-trawl survey of the Aleutian chain and the Bogoslof Island area in Feb. - March 1997, coinciding with the U.S. 1997 *Miller Freeman* Bogoslof survey. The second is a July-September 1997 echo integration-trawl survey to estimate distribution and abundance of pollock and other pelagic species in the Russian zone and in the Donut Hole. In both surveys, the *Prof. Kaganovskiy* will be used, and intership calibration with the U.S. *R/V Miller Freeman* will be scheduled and attempted.

Poland is planning to conduct trial fishing in the Donut Hole area in 1997. Timing and vessel used would be similar to 1996. Schedule details will be provided at a later date.

## 5.6 Observer training program

The US provided a document (Attachment 10) with background material for the Observer Program training for individuals from participating nations who will be responsible for training fisheries observers in each nation in the event of a Donut Hole fishery. Preferred dates for the course to be held in Seattle are March 24-29, 1997. Alternate dates are December 9-13, 1996. The U.S. is willing to assist in the cost of bringing participants to the program. Specifically, airfare and per diem expenses may be provided on request.

The U.S. requests that participants wishing to send 1 or 2 trainees should please respond by the November 1996 meeting in Moscow to facilitate planning.

