

Preparatory Conference for the Commission of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

Third Session

Santiago, Chile
30 January – 3 February 2012

REPORT

1. The Third Session of the Preparatory Conference for the Commission of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation was held in Santiago, Chile, from 30 January to 3 February 2012.
2. The Session was opened by Pablo Longueira, Minister of Economy, Fernando Schmidt, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Senor Pablo Galilea, UnderSecretary of Fisheries. Bill Mansfield, Chair of the Conference, thanked the Ministers and the UnderSecretary on behalf of the Participants.
3. The Conference adopted Annex A as its agenda for the Session.
4. The Executive Secretary provided an updated report on the **Functions and Staffing of the Secretariat** (PrepCon-03-INF-06) and presented a **Report on the Funding of the Interim Secretariat** (PrepCon-03-INF-05). The Executive Secretary also presented a **Budget for the first financial period of the Commission** (PrepCon-03-INF-07).
5. The Depository of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the South Pacific Ocean 2009, the Government of New Zealand, presented a **Report on the Status of the Convention** (PrepCon-03-INF-08). A number of Participants indicated that they would ratify, accept or approve the Convention in the coming months.
6. The Executive Secretary presented a **Report on Interim Management Measures** (PrepCon-03-INF-02). The Conference discussed the implementation of the Interim Measures as recorded in the **Report on Interim Management Measures**, and as a result of further information received by the Secretariat, as well as queries raised by Participants, a revised Report was prepared (PrepCon-03-INF-02 Rev 1).
7. Regarding the level of compliance with the 2011 Interim Measures the European Union and Chile stated that compliance remained unsatisfactory in the course of 2011.
8. Some Participants respected the 2011 Interim Measures provisions only partially in relation to the submission of authorised vessels lists, catch reporting and provision of data as required by the Data Standards. Moreover, only four reports on the implementation were submitted by the required deadline (including by one Participant who did not join the 2011 Interim Measures), with one report submitted during the meeting.
9. The Conference expressed concern with the low level of compliance with the Interim Measures by some of the Participants stating that while the Measures are voluntary, all efforts should be made, in line with the 2012 Interim Measures for Pelagic Fisheries, to allow for the rebuilding of the jack mackerel stock which remains in a very poor condition.
10. Andrew Penney, Chair of the Interim Scientific Working Group (SWG), presented a report on the tenth meeting of the Interim Scientific Working Group (Annex B).

11. The Conference thanked the SWG for completion of the jack mackerel stock assessment as requested in the 2011 interim measures for Pelagic Fisheries annexed to the report of the second session of the Preparatory Conference. The Conference expressed grave concern that the SWG report confirmed that the stock remained in a seriously depleted state. In light of this the Conference agreed that further reductions in catch were required to provide any reasonable certainty of the stock rebuilding.
12. The Conference [adopted the 2012 Interim Measures for Pelagic Fisheries species effective from 4 February annexed to this report (Annex C).
13. Chile expressed its consent to the Interim Measures adopted during the third session of the Preparatory Conference and declared its commitment to undertake its best efforts to comply, in as much as possible, with paragraph 12 of these measures.
14. The Conference noted the attached statement presented by the Government of Peru and further noted that Peru will continue, in exercising its sovereign rights, applying strict conservation measures for the catches of *Trachurus* species in waters under its national jurisdiction in 2012. The Meeting further acknowledged the information provided by the Government of Peru regarding the IMARPE report for *Trachurus* species in 2012, which states that the annual catches of *Trachurus* species in waters under Peru's national jurisdiction must be between 100,000 to 120,000 tonnes in order to maintain current levels of biomass. Peru further advised that, pending further scientific advice from IMARPE, that its Minister of Production will adopt its national management measures based upon the IMARPE report for *Trachurus* species in 2012.
15. Korea, which had not accepted the 2011 Interim Measures announced that, despite the difficulties this would cause for its fishing industry as the vessels are about to commence fishing, it would accept the 2012 Interim Measures. The Conference welcomed this announcement.
16. The Meeting requested the Chair to communicate with the Government of Ecuador to make it aware of the 2011 report of the Interim Scientific Working Group and the results of the revised stock assessment for *Trachurus* species, and to urge the Government of Ecuador, in accordance with the objective of the Convention and in the light of the grave status of the *Trachurus* stock, to exercise restraint with respect to catches of *Trachurus* species in waters under its national jurisdiction.
17. The Conference adopted the report of the SWG, including the draft Bottom Fishery Impact Assessment Standard (BFIAS). In addition the Conference discussed the future work of the SWG and requested that the SWG conduct the work specified in Annex A of the 2012 Interim Measures for Pelagic Fisheries.
18. Rafael Duarte, Chair of the Data and Information Working Group (DIWG) presented a report on the ninth meeting of the DIWG (Annex D). The Conference adopted the report, including the revised Data Standards prepared by the DIWG (Annex E).
19. The Conference agreed some changes to the draft Financial Regulations, specifically the finalisation of the guidelines for the Fund to facilitate the effective participation of developing State Contracting Parties in the region, contained in Annex 2 of the regulations.

20. The Conference also held a further discussion on rule 4.7 of the draft Financial Regulations – the formula for the calculation of contributions to the Commission budget. The Conference recommended a formula for inclusion in Rule 4.7 of the draft Financial Regulations but noted there were some issues¹ that the Commission might wish to consider further before adopting a final formula.

21. On the basis of information from participants regarding ratification, the Conference expected this to be its final meeting. As such it prepared a final report from the Preparatory Conference to be transmitted to the Commission (Annex F).

22. Provided sufficient ratifications were received to allow the Convention to enter into force, New Zealand offered to host the first meeting of the Commission from 28 January 2013, and the Participants welcomed this offer.

23. The Conference thanked the Government of Chile for hosting the Session.

24. The Session was closed at 3.00pm on 3 February 2012.

25. Session was attended by the following States, regional economic integration organisations and fishing entities: Australia, Chile, China, Colombia, Cook Islands, Cuba, Kingdom of Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands, European Union, Fiji, France, Korea, New Zealand, Peru, Russian Federation, Tonga, United States of America, Vanuatu, Chinese Taipei. The following also attended as observers: Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, United Nations Office for Project Services, Birdlife international, CeDePesca, Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, Greenpeace International, Marine Stewardship Council, New Zealand High Seas Group Incorporated, Pew Environment Group, World Wildlife Fund. A list of the attendees is attached as Annex G.

¹ Including, inter alia, which 'fishery resources' the Commission will specify as forming part of the variable fee under Article 15(2) (whether all fishery resources will be taken into account in determining a Party's total catch, or only those subject to active management or scientific consideration by the Commission); how to allocate fishery resources as 'pelagic' or 'demersal' (whether by species, gear type, where taken in the water column or by another method); and whether and under what circumstances catch taken in the exclusive economic zone should be considered in determining a Party's budgetary contribution.

Attachment

STATEMENT OF PERU

Peru reaffirms its commitment towards the conservation and responsible use of fishery resources, especially *Trachurus* species whose recovery requires the cooperation of States, regional organizations of economic integration and fishing entities. Peru in accordance with the objectives of the Convention and as an expression of its commitment to the recovery of Jack Mackerel, whose fishery in Peru is essentially oriented to direct human consumption, will continue to comply with the interim measures for the conservation of pelagic species on the High Seas, adopted in the framework of the Preparatory Conference.

Likewise, Peru, in the exercise of its sovereign rights, will continue setting strict conservation measures for the Jack Mackerel resource, in its jurisdictional waters, based on the best available scientific knowledge. This year the report on the Jack Mackerel prepared by the Instituto del Mar del Peru (IMARPE) for January 2012, notes that, based on the assessments done by the end of December 2011, the projection of the population of Jack Mackerel indicate that, in order to maintain current levels of biomass, "the annual catch must be between 100,000 to 120,000 tonnes", amount which may be adjusted according to variations in catch rates per unit of effort and the estimate obtained in the 2012 summer cruise. This report and others which eventually IMARPE would present will be the basis for the Ministry of Production decisions on fishing management during 2012.

Finally, Peru considers that there are enough indicative elements about the existence of a distinct sub-stock in its jurisdictional waters and, as such, calls for the strengthening of the research of the Scientific Working Group that will allow studies on the structure of this species.