Appendix 12

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

8-12 November 1999
Pusan, Republic of Korea

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Representatives from the six Parties to the Convention for the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea met in Pusan, Republic of Korea, and continued their cooperative efforts to conserve and manage pollock stocks in the Convention Area.

The Fourth Annual Conference held under terms of the Convention took place November 8-12, 1999. It was chaired by Mr. Im Hong-Jae of the Republic of Korea. The six countries who are members of the Convention--the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Poland, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America -- agreed on conservation and management measures and reviewed scientific information on the status of pollock stocks. The Scientific and Technical Committee agreed on a plan of work for 2000.

Based on the report of the Scientific and Technical Committee, the Parties agreed that data was insufficient to directly determine the biomass of the pollock stocks in the entire Aleutian Basin. Korea, Japan, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of Poland, strongly proposed the establishment of an Allowable Harvest Level (AHL) for 2000, considering the scientific rationale, the difficulties and situations of their fishermen and scientific data available for the Bogoslof Island pollock spawning stocks. After a thorough discussion by the Parties, taking into consideration that the moratorium had not contributed to the stock recovery in the Central Bering Sea for the past seven years, the Annual Conference did not reach consensus to set the Allowable Harvest Level for the commercial fishery for pollock in the Central Bering Sea during 2000. In such a situation, under the procedure set out in Article VII.2. and Annex Part 1 of this Convention, the Allowable Harvest Level for 2000 was set at zero. Therefore in 2000, there will be no directed fishing on the Aleutian Basin pollock stock. However, based upon the terms of the Convention, trial fishing by vessels of the Parties to the Convention will be permitted in 2000, under the terms and conditions that were established by the Annual Conference in 1998.

The Parties reached consensus that when a commercial fishery resumes, catch reports will be submitted on a biweekly basis, as proposed by Korea. The Parties also agreed to convene a workshop, either in the U.S. or Japan, to review the status of Aleutian Basin pollock stocks, factors affecting recovery of the stock, including prey-predator relationships; the effects of the moratorium and its continuation; and trial fishing procedures.

There was also discussion on accepting requests for observer status by non-Party States and other International Organizations. Interim measures for non-Party state and intergovernmental organization (IGO) requests were agreed. The Parties will continue their work on transparency issues.

The People's Republic of China invited the Parties to convene the Fifth Annual Conference during g the week of November 6, 2000 in Shanghai. The Republic of Poland extended a preliminary invitation to host the Sixth Annual Conference in 2001.