

2023 Report of Working Group on Small Pelagic Fish (WG 43)

Working Group on Small Pelagic Fish (WG 43) held its business meeting online for two hours on September 13, 2023 (Tuesday) (Western Pacific time zones) / 14 (Wednesday) (Eastern Pacific time zones). WG 43 is one component of the joint ICES-PICES Working Group on Small Pelagic Fish (WGSPF). Drs. Ryan Rykaczewski and Akinori Takasuka organized the meeting as co-chairs of the PICES portion of this Working Group. There were 14 participants (*Endnote 1*) in the meeting; some of the absent members emailed to indicate conflicting meetings.

An ICES–PICES–FAO joint symposium on “Small Pelagic Fish: New Frontiers in Science and Sustainable Management” was successfully held during November 7–11 in Lisbon, Portugal. A joint working group meeting was also held immediately after the symposium. As this year is the last year of the term of WG 43 (2019–2023), the WG 43 meeting agenda (*Endnote 2*) focused on reporting about the symposium and the post-symposium meeting, updates from different “activity groups,” discussing potential themes for a future working group, and plans for a future international symposium on small pelagic fish.

Below are notes summarizing key points from the agenda items of the WG 43 meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 1

Brief updates from the members

The members in attendance briefly introduced themselves and their interests in small pelagic fish. The members reconfirmed the information regarding their roles and activities associated with WG 43.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Report of the symposium and the post-symposium meeting (Lisbon, November 2022)

The co-chairs briefly summarized the symposium and the post-symposium meeting (Lisbon, November 2022). The symposium constituted seven Topic Sessions and six Workshops. Additionally, an evening mentoring event was held and was designed to connect early career scientists with mentors who have experience working across diverse geographic regions, disciplines, and career paths. Overall, the symposium attracted 288 participants hailing from 39 countries and four international organizations (PICES, ICES, FAO, and NPFC). Scientists came from six continents: Australia (5), Africa (18), Europe (168), Asia (36), North America (47), and South America (15) and 47 participants were from developing countries. The group was nearly gender-balanced (47% female, 53% male). In addition, a substantial portion of the attendees were identified as early career scientists (44%). The details of the symposium are reported in PICES Press Vol. 31, No.1. At the post-symposium meeting, the attendees reviewed and discussed progress reported from the different activity groups and considered future topics that might guide international collaboration on small pelagic fish studies. The symposium and meeting in November served as a venue for expanding the networking environment for international and multidisciplinary collaboration.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Report of activities and achievements from the activity groups, following the symposium

Dr. Ryan Rykaczewski summarized the progress in Activity 7 (improving short-term forecasts and/or long-term projections). Dr. Noelle Bowlin introduced activities and the current status of a review paper from Activity 2 (life cycle closures - bottlenecks and gaps in knowledge). Dr. Richard Brodeur noted the progress in papers related to Activity 4 (trophodynamic processes) from the symposium. Dr. Francis Juanes followed up

with information on publications from the works of Activity 4. Dr. Chris Rooper mentioned the current status of the review paper idea from Activity 6 (survey design and monitoring). Dr. Akinori Takasuka shared the current status of preparation of a possible reviewer paper from Activity 1 (critical review, evaluation, and testing of hypotheses). The other activity groups were not reported at the meeting as the activity groups were not necessarily well represented by the present participants.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Current status of the special issues (MEPS and CJFAS) of the symposium

The current status of the special issues of the symposium was reported. Dr. Ryan Rykaczewski summarized the editorial processes for the special issue of Marine Ecology Progress Series. Dr. Chris Rooper shared the information on the editorial processes for the special issue of Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Science. These two special issues will be used as final reports of the WG 43.

AGENDA ITEM 5

Next symposium (current status of planning)

The idea and planning of a future symposium was shared among the attendees. The next symposium is now being designed to be held in La Paz in Spring 2026. Main contacts are Salvador Lluç Cota (CIBNOR) and Ruben Rodriguez-Sanchez (CICIMAR). Governing Council reviewed the proposal for the symposium, recommended by Science Board, and approved the joint co-convening the symposium with ICES and FAO.

AGENDA ITEM 6

Discussion for future working group

As the current WG 43 will end in 2023, the attendees discussed potential strategies to continue the activities. Proposing a future WG on small pelagic fish is the main idea. For that purpose, the attendees exchanged the ideas of originality and priority of the new WG. In addition, the attendees confirmed who would likely participate in the 2024 PICES Annual Meeting in October. The co-chairs also mentioned the planning of a small workshop to be held in La Paz in February 2024.

WG43 Endnote 1

WG 43 participation list

Members

Ryan Rykaczewski (USA, Co-Chair/PICES)
Akinori Takasuka (Japan, Co-Chair/PICES)
Jennifer Boldt (Canada)
Francis Juanes (Canada)
Chris Rooper (Canada)
Fei Chai (China)
Motomitsu Takahashi (Japan)
Sukyung Kang (Korea)
Jung Jin Kim (Korea)
Matthew Baker (USA)
Noelle M. Bowlin (USA)
Richard Brodeur (USA)

Members unable to attend

China: Xianshi Jin, Yongjun Tian, Hui Zhang, Kui Zhang
Japan: Sachihiko Itoh, Toshihide Kitakado, Shinichiro Nakayama, Haruka Nishikawa, Kazuhiro Oshima
Korea: Dohoon Kim, Jung Jin Kim
USA: Isaac C. Kaplan

Observers

Heejoong Kang (Korea)
Dongwha Sohn (Korea)

WG43 Endnote 2

WG 43 meeting agenda

1. Brief updates from the members
2. Report of the symposium and the post-symposium meeting (Lisbon, November 2022)
3. Report of activities and achievements from the activity groups, following the symposium
4. Current status of the special issues (MEPS and CJFAS) of the symposium
5. Next symposium (current status of planning)
6. Discussion for future working group