



ICES  
CIEM



## PICES-ICES WG53/WGSPF meeting (May 2026)

### Activity 6: Forage Communities Beyond Boundary Currents

Activity leaders: Ryan Rykaczewski (USA), Chris Rooper (Canada), YOUR NAME HERE\*



\*Recruiting an additional co-leader, please volunteer!

# Activity progress: objectives

- Use existing datasets to conduct comparative analyses of forage communities in open ocean systems, examining spatial and temporal variability and underlying drivers where data permit (related to ToR 1);
- Synthesize insights from established mesopelagic research communities to understand current knowledge of sensitivity to oceanographic conditions, while contributing SPF expertise to develop testable hypotheses regarding temporal variability and climate responses (related to ToR 2);
- Identify observational and modeling studies necessary to improve understanding of interannual to multi-decadal scale variability in forage communities, with focus on resolving responses to climate change and anthropogenic impacts including deep-sea mining (related to ToR 3 and ToR 5);
- Assess current understanding of climate change impacts on open ocean forage communities, particularly in subtropical gyres where variability and climate sensitivity are poorly characterized (related to ToR 5);
- Contribute to 2026 ICES/PICES/FAO symposium by participating in relevant sessions and workshops to explore opportunities for integrating SPF approaches with beyond-boundary current forage research (related to ToR 6)

Existing datasets offer insight on variability.

Synthesize insight to develop hypotheses.

Articulate gaps in observations.

Impacts of long-term climate change?

Participate in sessions and workshops.



# Activity progress: meetings

- No formal meetings yet (the activity has been on the back burner), but do have a growing list of interested individuals
- Some informal discussions among interested members
- On the list for summer/fall 2026







ICES  
CIEM



# Activity progress: results

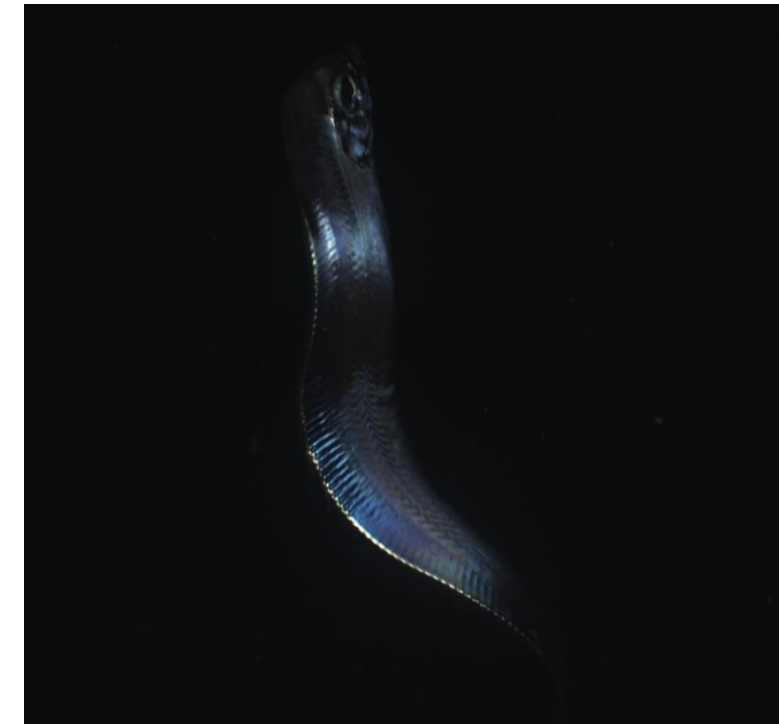
- Workshop in PICES 2026 Annual Meeting (Nanaimo BC)

*Beyond boundaries: Understanding epi- and mesopelagic forage communities of the open ocean*

**Convenors:** Ryan Rykaczewski, Motomitsu Takahashi, Chiyuki Sassa, Vladimir Radchenko, Chris Rooper

*Invited speakers: Anela Choy (UCSD), Evgeny Pakhomov (UBC)*

**Please submit an abstract and participate!!**



# Activity progress: discussion

- Workshop intended to catalyze broader engagement.
- Use workshop momentum to develop a synthesis product
  - PICES Press article and/or perspectives manuscript
- Coordinate with new PICES Seamount Group (WG56) through shared membership
- Build on the legacy of PICES WG 14 (Micronekton of the North Pacific).







ICES  
CIEM



# General points for WG meeting

- Aspiration: understand variability of open-ocean forage and their response to ocean and climate forcing.



- Coastal SPF science offers decades of exploration of similar questions.
- The open-ocean field is still largely descriptive: who is there? trophic links? standing biomass?
- Potential for cross-pollination with many groups
- In 2050, will there be targeted fisheries for mesopelagic fishes?

