**Action #2: Harvest strategy**

***Action Goal: Demonstrate there is a robust and precautionary harvest strategy in place***

**PI 1.2.1**

Scientists of the Federal State Budget Scientific Institution "Russian Federal Research Institute Of Fisheries and Oceanography" (VNIRO) and its regional branches (KamchatNIRO, MagadanNIRO, SakhNIRO (Sakhalin branch), TINRO (Pacific branch), KhabarovskNIRO) annually conduct research on the survival rate of Pacific salmon generations at all life stages. In accordance with Article 29.1 of the Federal Law No. 166-FZ dated December 20, 2004 "On Fisheries and Conservation of Aquatic Biological Resources", the scientific institution and its branches develop materials justifying the projected harvest (catch) of Pacific salmon in the Far Eastern fishery basin. These materials include 49 projections for 6 species of Pacific salmon with 125 stock units. The projections were prepared with the participation of 26 researchers from the Far Eastern branches of FSBSI VNIRO, including the Sakhalin regional branch SakhNIRO.

The methods for estimating projected catches are based on direct observations during fishing, population dynamics and data on the Pacific salmon species composition in the Far Eastern fishery basin.

The projected catches of Pacific salmon are, in turn, the basis for the development of Pacific Salmon Fishery Strategy in the Sakhalin Region in 2024 (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy).

The main goal of the Strategy is to achieve the maximum possible catches through sustainable fishing, which will ensure the escapement of the necessary number of salmon spawners to spawn.

Traditionally, the basic principles of the Strategy include:

- fishing sites and catch volume;

- recommendations on the system of organization and restriction of fishing;

- fishing open and close periods;

- passing days (periods);

- deadlines for information submission on harvest (catch) and spawning escapement;

- changes in permitted catch volumes (harvest);

- state monitoring of salmon runs;

- general issues related to the organization of the 2024 salmon fishing season.

Thus, the Strategy includes: all basic principles of preventive measures in salmon fishery management; mechanisms of operative decision-making process based on the current situation; prescribed recommendations on the Anadromous Fish Commission in the Sakhalin Region (hereinafter - the Commission) actions, depending on the incoming operational information on the fishery situation.

Traditionally, after a series of regional meetings, the Strategies were approved at the Far Eastern Scientific & Fishery Council (hereinafter referred to as DVNPS) meeting held on April 25, 2024 in Vladivostok. The meeting was attended by representatives of all stakeholders. The DVNPS Council included 96 participants with the representatives of the Federal Agency for Fishery and its territorial departments, the VNIRO and its regional branches, the Border Service of the Russian Federal Security Service, industry associations of fishing companies and specialized executive authorities of the Far Eastern Federal District.

Kirill Kolonchin, Director of VNIRO, Doctor of Economics, said at that DVNPS meeting: “During the mass scale salmon run (from May to October 2024) there will be a well-functioning fishing regulation system for these species. All scientific recommendations to adjust the projected salmon catch will be promptly considered at the meetings of the federal headquarters during the fishing season. The further information will be reported to regional anadromous fish commissions and shared with the fishermen”.

Discussion and approval of the Fishery Strategies was widely covered in the mass media. More information can be found by the following links:

<https://sakh.online/news/18/2024-02-20/organizatsiyu-lososevoy-putiny-v-2024-godu-obsudili-na-sahaline-403324>

<https://sakh.online/news/18/2024-04-11/sahalinskiy-rybohozyastvennyy-sovet-opredelil-kontury-predstoyaschey-strady-413634>

<http://vniro.ru/ru/novosti/arkhiv-za-2024-god/uchastniki-dvnps-obsudili-strategii-promysla-tikhookeanskikh-lososej-dalnevostochnymi-regionami-v-2024-godu>

<https://fish.gov.ru/news/2024/04/25/ilya-shestakov-pervonachalnyj-prognoz-na-losevuyu-putinu-2024-320-tys-tonn-no-prognoz-poka-predvaritelnyj-i-mozhet-byt-uvelichen/>

For the South Kuril Zone, which includes Kunashir Island, the projected volume of Pacific salmon harvest (Pink, Chum, Sockeye and Masu) in 2024 was 22,935 tons. Open and close fishery dates for commercial, traditional and amateur fishing were as follows:

- for Pink Salmon - from August 01 to September 10;

- for Chum Salmon - from September 11 to November 30.

The 2024 Strategy did not include any fishing restrictions or recommendations to reduce fishing pressure on Kunashir Pink and Chum Salmon. It is particularly stipulated that the open and close dates of commercial, amateur and traditional fishing for Pacific salmon may be promptly adjusted by decision of the Commission on the basis of scientific recommendations of SakhNIRO and the Central Institute of FSBSI "VNIRO", taking into account the real-time hydrological situation and the level of spawning escapement. In case of insufficient runs, fishing may be banned at any time depending on the actual returns of Pacific salmon based on the results of state monitoring of the spawning grounds escapement.

The process of developing, discussing and approving the Strategy was held this August at meetings with SakhNIRO specialists (Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk). The SakhNIRO’s Salmon Laboratory specialists said that complete closure of the Pink salmon fishing in the coastal waters of Kunashir was initially proposed. However, in this case collection of scientific information would be discontinued, which is unacceptable. Therefore, it was decided to open fishing with minimum quotas, and further to take measures aimed, if necessary, at reducing the fishing pressure.

Such a decision was subsequently taken. On behalf of the Association of Fishermen of Sakhalin Region (AFS), an official appeal was drawn up to SakhNIRO Institute on the initiative of PCF Yuzhno-Kurilsky Ryibokombinat Co., Ltd. The scientists developed and submitted recommendations for consideration, and the Commission by its decision on August 28 (Minutes No. 38) determined the passing period from August 29 to September 10, which in essence was a fishing ban period.

**List of literary and Internet resources:**

Minutes of the Far Eastern Scientific & Fishery Council (DVNPS) Meeting dated April 25, 2024, TINRO, Vladivostok, Russia with the approved Pacific Salmon Fishery Strategy in the Sakhalin Region in 2024

Minutes of meetings of the Sakhalin Region Anadromous Fish Commission No. 38 dated August 28, 2024

Association of Fishermen of Sakhalin Region (AFS) Letter No. 104-PS addressed to the Head of SakhNIRO dated August 26, 2024

Minutes of meetings in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk dated August 14-15, 2024.

**Publications in media:**

<https://sakh.online/news/18/2024-02-20/organizatsiyu-lososevoy-putiny-v-2024-godu-obsudili-na-sahaline-403324>

<https://sakh.online/news/18/2024-04-11/sahalinskiy-rybohozyastvennyy-sovet-opredelil-kontury-predstoyaschey-strady-413634>

<http://vniro.ru/ru/novosti/arkhiv-za-2024-god/uchastniki-dvnps-obsudili-strategii-promysla-tikhookeanskikh-lososej-dalnevostochnymi-regionami-v-2024-godu>

<https://fish.gov.ru/news/2024/04/25/ilya-shestakov-pervonachalnyj-prognoz-na-losevuyu-putinu-2024-320-tys-tonn-no-prognoz-poka-predvaritelnyj-i-mozhet-byt-uvelichen/>

Lyudmila Fedorova,

Fisheries Eco-Certification Consultant

September 16, 2024