

# US-Japan Second Data Symposium

Post-Workshop Report, July 2022

## 1. Event summary

On June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> (28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> in Japan), EDF hosted the second US-Japan Data Symposium, an online two-day workshop featuring fisheries scientists, managers, and other fisheries stakeholders from Japan and the United States. The primary purposes of the workshop were to discuss how to enhance data collection for profitable, sustainable, climate-resilient fisheries purposes, to share lessons between Japan and the United States, and to build bridges across borders and between fishery stakeholders.

Roughly 80 participants attended the workshop daily, with more than 100 unique participants attending the event. The Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA) joined EDF as a co-host. EDF also received support and assistance from Japanese NGO partners, including Seafood Legacy, Umito Partners, and Umineko Sustainability Institute.

## 2. Goals and Organizing Themes

The US-Japan Second Data symposium was a continuation of an effort to bring international lessons and experience on practical and innovative fisheries data collection and utilization mechanisms to support Japan's landmark fishery reform effort. To implement the reform, many new regulations and management measures under the reform Act will need to be developed and implemented. Success will require successfully overcoming the significant challenges that remain, including dramatically increased workloads to carry out new stock assessments, implementing new TAC-based management requirements and processes, the need to balance resource conservation and fishers' livelihoods, and the effective development and integration of a new data collection system. At the same time, the impacts of climate change are emerging as a major new issue that must be considered.

The first data symposium was convened in 2021 with the theme of creative approaches and emerging tools for stock assessments with a particular focus on advanced data collection technology and discussion of cost-effective, less labor-intensive stock assessment processes. That issue was highlighted by FRA as a major challenge to successful reform implementation.

Building on that first workshop, the second data symposium provided an opportunity for Japan to share its fisheries reform progress and ongoing challenges related to data collection. It also created a platform for both countries to share hard-won lessons on fisheries management, with a particular focus on how new technologies and enhanced data collection can benefit fishermen, scientists, and managers. At the same time, another major goal of the workshop was to create greater collaboration, especially on fisheries science between the US and Japan.

The symposium focused on four sub-themes over two days – 1) A discussion of the existing data collection systems, costs, gaps, and opportunities in Japan and the U.S. ; 2) Data challenges

and opportunities with a focus on stock assessments, data integration, monitoring and compliance, and better prediction of extreme marine events; 3) Perspectives on fisher data collection with presentations on benefits, and challenges; and 4) Available technologies and data system improvements to create benefits for fishers and industry including traceability and markets, and more efficient/climate-informed fishing. The symposium was designed to maximize interaction between speakers and participants by providing Q&A sessions. Simultaneous translation ensured participants could understand the workshop content and interact with presenters.

### **3. Workshop recap**

Day 1 kicked off with high-level fisheries management representatives from both countries. The Japan Fishery Agency Director-General, Takashi Koya, made a concise introduction of the changing marine environment in the Pacific and the associated reduction in harvest for many traditional fisheries resources. He then described the current data time lag between fisheries assessments and ongoing reform efforts, and the importance of achieving near real-time and comprehensive data collection systems in the near future. The Executive Director of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Barry Thom, introduced the current U.S. West Coast groundfish management landscape and what needs to change in order for continued resource sustainability and profitability in a rapidly changing marine environment. He mentioned the key to achieving effective long-term management is a sound monitoring and data collection system. Both keynote speakers highlighted the necessity of cooperation on fisheries data collection between Japan and the U.S. to help overcome existing and new science and resource management challenges.

After the keynote speeches, Japanese and U.S. speakers discussed the current fisheries data collection systems in their respective countries, differences between Japan and the U.S., and emerging data challenges and opportunities. Shinji Uehara introduced how Japan collects fisheries data and recent efforts to improve resource evaluation. Tokio Wada provided a comprehensive introduction of the Japanese fishery information service center's newly constructed data collection system designed to enable various sources of fisheries data collection. Takuya Nakanowatari and Naoki Hirose introduced opportunities for incorporation of fisher collected oceanographic data and how such data can provide benefit back to fishers' while helping researchers to understand the changing marine environment. On the U.S. side, Kristen Koch used the U.S. West Coast groundfish case study to describe NMFS' fishery dependent and independent data collection processes, relative costs, and other considerations. Christopher Cusack from EDF introduced various innovative, advanced technologies to help address key science and management needs and increase efficiency.

On Day 2, former fisherman and current member of the Pacific Fishery Management Council, Bob Dooley, and fisheries attorney Joe Sullivan described why fishermen benefit from co-management and data sharing. Bob highlighted the importance of fishermen engagement, trust building, and working together with scientists and managers. Joe shared lessons for how to create systems that encourage fishers to share data and create certainty for managers and scientists about the accuracy of that data. Martin Arostegui from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute presented new research on relationships between oceanographic features and catch rates. Finally, Japanese fishery technology pioneers Yosuke Mizukami, Akira Watanabe, and Hajime Tanaka presented cases on how to apply technology in the real world to help better evaluate harvest, and how to provide

traceable, sustainable seafood to consumers.

#### **4. Workshop outcomes and next steps**

The symposium brought together managers, researchers, NGOs, and other fisheries stakeholders to discuss key data collection issues for fisheries management, especially under the Japanese Fisheries Reform Act, and under the influence of climate change. Over the course of the two-day workshop, there were enthusiastic discussions and a number of insightful questions. Specifically, questions regarding fishermen's incentives, trade-offs between costs, uncertainty, and adequacy of data, and how to incorporate climate considerations demonstrate the importance of the topic and the need to continue the dialogue on these important issues.

To help us understand the effectiveness of this workshop, and prepare for future workshops, EDF conducted a survey to collect feedback from participants. Feedback was largely positive and we will take the constructive recommendations to heart. EDF aims to continue to strengthen the relationships between Japan and the U.S. managers, scientists and fishermen through additional workshops and other efforts, and we hope to foster more frequent dialogue on important fisheries topics.

With regard to next steps, one recommendation was to plan for a future face-to-face workshop to enable more effective communication and deeper conversations. Another suggestion was to hold periodic workshops focused on data collection and other critical fishery management topics to foster collaboration between the two countries, while bringing more young fishery stakeholders into the conversation. Finally, many commenters shared a strong interest in an ongoing partnership between the U.S. and Japan that would help both sides better understand and mitigate climate impacts and build more effective, robust fisheries data systems for fisheries resource management in the Pacific.

Thank you for your participation and please stay tuned for upcoming workshops.

Environmental Defense Fund