

## **PICES contribution to the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea, June 2024.**

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The North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) is an intergovernmental science organization comprising six member countries that border the North Pacific (Canada, Japan, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and the United States of America). PICES has continued to implement the vision of its strategic plan in striving to engage scientists in trans-disciplinary multi-national collaborations to further our collective understanding of the North Pacific's natural systems and enhance ecological and social resilience of our coasts and oceans.

The period in question, September 2023 to August 2024, has encompassed three international meetings organized by PICES, all of which were UNDOS-endorsed (United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development) activities:

- The annual meeting, [PICES 2023](#), focussed on "*Connecting Science and Communities for Sustainable Seas*" and included thirteen topic sessions and eleven workshops related to this theme. Over 650 participants took part in the meeting. Of particular note was a workshop on "*Indigenous and Community-Led Approaches to support climate change adaptation and Ecosystem Resilience in the North Pacific and Arctic*" which produced a report on outcomes and further guidance [PICES-Press-2024-Vol32No1.pdf](#)
- The [2024 International Zooplankton Production Symposium](#) was the seventh in the multi-decadal series, co-convened with ICES, and focussed on New Horizons, including new techniques and technologies.
- The [2024 2nd Marine Socio-Ecological Systems Symposium](#) also co-convened with ICES brought social science into the discussions around ecosystem assessments.

These international events are essential fora for the latest research to be presented and discussed and the related communities to make progress toward UNDOS goals. Each event also included a dedicated event for Early Career Ocean Professionals to provide mentorship and networking opportunities, a cross-cutting theme of the UNDOS.

PICES additionally supports many UNCLOS activities by nominating and/or providing support for PICES members to participate and share regional science perspectives in these high-level activities:

- PICES nominated Dr Shang Chen into the World Ocean Assessment III pool of experts, and further disseminated the request for specialized expertise for chapters of the WOA III with relevant members, to provide scientific information about the North Pacific.
- PICES was represented at the International Seabed Authority Regional Environmental Management Plan for the Northwest Pacific in February 2024, and concluded that there is a need for further work which PICES member countries may request PICES to coordinate or contribute to. For example, supporting scientific data for the region are still rather limited and patchy and furthermore there is a lack of i) standard approaches, ii) standardization of CTD data, iii) synthesis and comparison of physio-chemical and biological data from different contractors, and iv) modelling. Biological data synthesis and comparison are necessary to understand the ecosystem and population connectivity and to delineate appropriate non-mining zones (or Areas

of Particular Environmental Interest, APEIs). The population connectivity in the Northwest Pacific is largely not known, due to the lack of collected specimens and cooperation.

- The ICES/PICES UNDOS Program SmartNet sponsored a side-event at the UNDOS Conference in Barcelona, April 2024, “What is the ocean we want? Global survey to understand perspectives on ocean decade outcomes”. The PICES Chair and two ECOP attended the conference.
- PICES submitted a contribution outlining views on the topic of “Sustainable fisheries management in the face of climate change” relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, in preparation for the 17<sup>th</sup> round of informal consultations of States Parties to the Agreement, held at the UNHQ in May 2024. Furthermore, the PICES Chair was selected as a panelist for the discussion panel on “Understanding the impacts of climate change on fisheries”.
- PICES is participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative global dialogue with regional seas organizations and regional fishery bodies in June 2024 to progress regional cooperation in relation to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).
- PICES Deputy Executive Secretary has been appointed as a member of the International Science Committee for the One Ocean Science Congress (OOSC) which will be held in conjunction with the United Nations Ocean Conference in June 2025. OOSC will prepare policy and management recommendations to address high-level ocean initiatives including GBF, High Seas Treaty, Plastic Treaty, etc. to UNOC Ocean Action Panels.