

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Certified 
James O. Campbell, Chairman

Date 12/8/87

MINUTES

78th Plenary Session
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
September 23-25, 1987
Hilton Hotel
Anchorage, Alaska

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met September 23-25, 1987 at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska. The Scientific and Statistical Committee and Advisory Panel began Monday, September 21. The Reporting Requirements Workgroup and Finance Committee also met during the week.

Members of the Council, Scientific and Statistical Committee, Advisory Panel and general public in attendance are listed below.

Council

James O. Campbell, Chairman
Rudy Petersen, Vice Chairman
Ken Parker for Don Collinsworth
(Parker on 9/23; Collinsworth on 9/24-25)
CDR George White for RADM Edward Nelson
Joseph Blum
Oscar Dyson
Ed Wolfe/Robert Ford

Robert U. Mace for
Randy Fisher
Robert McVey
Henry Mitchell
John Peterson
John Winther
Larry Cotter

NPFMC Staff

Jim H. Branson, Executive Director
Clarence Pautzke
Judy Willoughby
Denby Lloyd
Ron Miller

Terry Smith
Dick Tremaine
Helen Allen
Peggy Kircher

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Support Staff

Jim Balsiger, NMFS-NWAFC
Dale Evans, NMFS-AKR
Craig Hammond, NMFS-AKR
Jim Brooks, NMFS-AKR
Janet Smoker, NMFS-AKR
Jay Ginter, NMFS-AKR

Fred Gaffney, ADF&G
Loh-Lee Low, NMFS-NWAFC
Jon Pollard, NOAA-GC
Ron Berg, NMFS-AKR
Janet Wall, NMFS-Seattle
Brad Stevens, NMFS-Kodiak

Scientific and Statistical Committee

Phil Mundy, Chairman
Bill Aron
Douglas Eggers
Robert Burgner
Bill Clark

Richard Marasco, Vice-Chairman
Terry Quinn
Don Bevan
Don Rosenberg
Larry Hreha

Advisory Panel

Nancy Munro, Chairman
Bob Alverson, Vice Chairman
Rupe Andrews
Al Burch
Lamar Cotten
Rick Lauber
John Woodruff
Oliver Holm

Rich White
Thorn Smith
Cameron Jensen
Ron Peterson
Barry Fisher
Daniel O'Hara
Pete Isleib
Terry Baker

General Public

It was estimated that over 200 people attended the Council meeting during its session, including the following:

LCDR Tom Nies, USCG, Washington DC
CDR John Fearnow, USCG, Juneau
Reed Wasson, Eagle Fisheries
Woody Knebel, Wards Cove Packing Co.
Chris Hansen, Norfish
K. Minurra, Japan
Mel Monsen, AFDF
Mike McCune, Anchorage
Tamra L. Faris, NMFS-Juneau
Paul MacGregor, NPLGA
Odin Bendiksen, East Point Seafood Co.
Peter Block, Northern Deep Sea Fisheries
Chris Blackburn, Alaska Groundfish Data Bank
Steve Merson, Nat'l Maritime Health Systems
Robert Miller, Seattle
Hugh Reilly, AHSFA
Jim Niemela, Homer
Solomon Yue, Jr., Alaska World Trade Corporation
Chuck Kekoni, Assoc. of AK Halibut Fishermen

Rick Malsed, FVOA
J. Hayakawa
J. Husoy
Steve Grabacki, Graystar
H. Kawamura, Japan
S. Katasuo, Japan
Robert Ayers, NMFS-NWR
Mark Lundsten, Seattle
Bill Wilson, AEIDC
Joe Easley, PFMC
Daniel Zantek, Anchorage
Le Shanxun, CNMF
Dean Adams, FVOA
Jay Cherrier, Kenai
F. Morris, APRN
M. Mullen, Anchorage
Mike Hyal, Seattle
Steve Hughes, NRC
Don Leedy, NMFS-DC

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Phil Gunsolus, Alaska Pacific Int'l	Jeff Stephan, UFMA
George Anderson, Seattle	Jeff Withers, Anchorage
LeRoy Cossette, Kodiak	Norm Stadem, Anchorage
Perfenia Pletnikoff, Jr., St. Paul Island	Fred Yeck, Oregon
R. K. Dearborn, Univ. of AK, Sea Grant	Bill Orr, AFTA
Robt. F. Morgan, Oceantrawl, Inc.	H.A. Larkins, MRCI
Daniel Huppert, NMFS, La Jolla	Bill Arterburn, Willow
Dr. Dave Harrison, HCRA-Legislative	F. Husoy, B.C.
E. Harrington, Arctic Select Seafoods	Bill Hall, CFAB
Rosemary Hurst, Fisheries Rsch, New Zealand	Lyle Yeck, Oregon
Stephan Green, Clearwater Foods, Nova Scotia	Greg Baker, Seattle
Mike Atterberry, Alyeska Ocean	Mark Snigaroff, Atka
Steve Carr, Alyeska Ocean	Bernt Bodal, Seattle
Brian Melvin, Alyeska Ocean	Earl Kari, Anchorage
T. Yamamoto, Nat'l Federation of Med. Trawlers	Bob Waldrop, Ketchikan
E.H. Zeaser, Mrs. Paul's Kitchens, Inc.	Don McCaughran, IPHC
David Dittman, Anchorage	Rhonda Anderson, Seward
George Herfurth, NMFS-DC	Sam O. Hjelle, AFTA
Steve Smith, Kemp Pacific Fisheries	Paul Kolf, Anchorage
John Bruce, Deep Sea Fishermen's Union	R.M. Solomon, Anchorage
William Gilbert, Washington	Bill Jacobson, Kodiak
John Wedin, PSPA	Dean Paddock, Anchorage
Stephan B. Johnson, JDSTA	Colin Harris, FRI/UW
Phil Erdal, Seattle	Ken Kobayashi, JDSTA
Linda McGowan, Deep Sea Fisheries	Amjoun Ruiyouns, Morocco
Ian N. Clark, New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture	

A. CALL TO ORDER, APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Jim Campbell called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m., Wednesday, September 23. The agenda was approved with the deletion of item C-5(c), a proposal from St. George Island Trust for a groundfish allocation, at the request of the St. George Island Trust. Jim Branson suggested a wording change in the May minutes, page 20 of the draft minutes, under the general principles of the draft Domestic Observer Policy, General Principle #4 should read "All data will be held confidential and individual skippers will be provided with copies of trip reports from the observers they carry."

Bob Mace moved to approve the minutes of the May 1987 Council meeting with the suggested change. The motion was seconded by John Peterson and carried with no objection.

Chairman Campbell introduced Ken Parker, alternate for Don Collinsworth, CDR George White, alternate for RADM Nelson, Ian Clark of the New Zealand Fisheries Department, and welcomed Ed Wolfe from the State Department. Certificates of reappointment were presented to Henry Mitchell and John Peterson.

Election of Officers

Bob Mace nominated Jim Campbell for Chairman and John Peterson for Vice Chairman for the next 12 months. The motion was seconded by John Winther and the nominations closed. The motion carried unanimously.

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B. SPECIAL REPORTS

B-1 Executive Director's Report

Jim Branson reviewed the Executive Director's report in Council notebooks noting that Council requests for programmatic funds are due and that a call for Advisory Panel nominations will be issued in the next Council newsletter. The Advisory Panel Nominating Committee will make recommendations to the Council at the December meeting.

B-2 Domestic Fisheries Report by ADF&G

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game reported that approximately 50,882 tons of herring, worth over \$41 million exvessel, were harvested between July 1, 1986 and June 30, 1987. The 1987 Southeast Alaska all gear chinook salmon catch is projected to be 278,000 fish, with trollers catching 242,000, net fishermen taking 14,000 chinook, and sport fishermen 22,000.

Based on ADF&G and National Marine Fisheries Service surveys, the state set the following dates and harvest guidelines for the 1987-88 Westward king crab fisheries:

	<u>Opening Date</u>	<u>GHL (lbs)</u>
Kodiak	Closed	0
Alaska Peninsula	Closed	0
Dutch Harbor	Closed	0
St. Matthew	September 1	600,000 - 1,000,000
Pribilof Islands	September 25	300,000 - 1,700,000
Bristol Bay	September 25	8,500,000 - 17,700,000
Adak	November 1	500,000 - 1,500,000

B-3 NMFS Management Report

The National Marine Fisheries Service reported that domestic groundfish fishermen processing on board or delivering to U.S. processors (DAP) have harvested approximately 166,370 mt of groundfish in the Bering Sea and 57,358 mt in the Gulf of Alaska through early September. The Gulf harvest included about 10,860 mt pollock, 1,149 mt flounders, 15,771 mt Pacific cod, 3,013 mt Pacific ocean perch, 4,264 mt rockfish, 1,811 mt thornyhead, 20,477 mt sablefish, and a small amount of other species. The Bering Sea and Aleutians U.S.-processed catch included 106,841 mt pollock, 5,821 mt Greenland turbot, 21 mt arrowtooth flounder, 13,374 mt flounders, 33,160 mt Pacific cod, 715 mt Pacific ocean perch, 444 mt rockfish, 5,686 mt sablefish, 104 mt Atka mackerel, and 204 mt of other species.

Foreign allocations this year have been 87,995 mt, all in the Bering Sea. Japan got 73,194 mt, South Korea 14,157 mt and the Republic of China 644 mt. The foreign catch through September was 27,225 mt, almost all by Japan. Eighty-three percent of the catch was Pacific cod taken by Japan longliners. Foreign catches were about 487,000 mt off Alaska last year.

B-4 Enforcement and Surveillance Report by U.S. Coast Guard

Coast Guard enforcement activities this summer have focused on monitoring the high seas salmon gillnet fleet operations south of 46°N latitude and west of 174°E longitude and the high seas squid gillnet fleets of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Japanese squid gillnet vessels were boarded nineteen times but no salmon were found. Numerous vessels were observed fishing north of the authorized areas and the Japanese government is investigating a report of one driftnet being sighted 160 nautical miles northeast of the authorized squid fishery area. The Coast Guard also reported two separate incidents of Soviet trawlers operating east of the Soviet-claimed 1867 Convention Line and inside the U.S. EEZ. The incidents were investigated by the Soviets and masters of two vessels were dismissed.

To date, the Coast Guard has issued fifty-one reports of violations and written warnings to foreign fishing vessels for MFCMA infractions such as retention of prohibited species, failure to maintain required logs, failure to provide adequate boarding ladders, illegal taking of a marine mammal, and failure to maintain an International Radio Call Sign.

Two days after the season closed in IPHC Area 4A the U.S. vessel CONSTITUTION was boarded and 29,925 pounds of illegal halibut were found. The vessel's catch logs were not maintained and buoys were not marked with the vessel's name or identifying numbers. The Coast Guard seized the halibut.

B-5 Joint Venture Operations

The joint venture catch off Alaska through September 12 as reported by NMFS was 1,308,216 mt. Mainly from the Bering Sea and Aleutians, by species:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Catch (mt)</u>
Pollock	1,000,219
Pacific cod	54,928
Flatfish	35,764
Yellowfin sole	182,612
Others	<u>34,693</u>
TOTAL	1,308,216

The catch to date exceeds the 1,025,735 mt and 789,832 mt joint venture catches reported at the September Council meetings in 1986 and 1985. Joint venture activity picked up in February with 92 U.S. trawlers making deliveries. The number of trawlers increased to 110 in early June and then declined with the pollock closure on June 6 and the yellowfin sole closure June 29. Fishing for Atka mackerel, other flatfish, Pacific cod, and Aleutian pollock continued through early August with additional harvests of a few thousand tons of each of those species. Most of the joint venture companies are participating in this fall's pollock fishery.

B-6 1987 Bering Sea/Aleutians Crab Survey Results

The 1987 Eastern Bering Sea crab survey consisted of 380 successful trawl tows covering approximately 135,900 square nautical miles, the same area as in 1986

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except that 6 stations northwest of the Pribilof Islands were omitted and 16 stations were added northwest of St. Matthew Island. Golden king crab were not surveyed. Twelve additional stations were towed at 10-mile intervals in water less than 25 fm deep along the coast of the Alaska Peninsula between 160° and 162°W longitude to assess the abundance of king crab in inshore waters. The following is a brief summary of survey findings:

Red king crab, Southeast and Pribilof Districts. Estimated 7.9 million legal males, an increase of about 30%. There was no significant change in the population of pre-recruits, but large females increased significantly by 240%. NMFS concludes the population is increasing in 1987 with an outlook of long-term improved recruitment.

Blue king crab, Pribilof Islands. Estimated 732,000 legal males, an increase of about 70%. No significant change in pre-recruits and a slight decrease in large females. NMFS characterized the population as stable but poor. Recruitment information is questionable because of inadequate data.

Blue king crab, St. Matthew, Northern District. Estimated 737,000 legal males, an increase of about 90%. No significant change in pre-recruits or large females. The population is characterized as stable but poor. Recruitment and reproduction information questionable due to inadequate data.

Tanner crab, Southeast and Pribilof Districts. Estimated 8.3 million legal males, a significant increase of 164%. Both pre-recruits and large females also showed significant increases of 53% and 163%, respectively. The population is increasing with significantly increased abundance of juveniles and improving recruitment.

Tanner crab, all districts, excluding northwest corner. Estimated 132.6 million large males, an increase of 60%. Both small males and large females showed significant increases of 260% and 520%, respectively. The population is increasing and the fishery is increasing because of expansion of grounds. Recruitment to the fishery is improving because of successful reproduction in recent years. Further increases are expected in the near term.

Hair crab. Estimated 1.2 million large males, no significant change. Pre-recruits also showed no significant change while females increased slightly. The fishery was characterized as declining, but juvenile production seems to be improving.

B-7 Special Reports

(a) Dumping and Pollution Problems in Unimak Pass Area

No report was available.

(b) Yellowfin Sole Joint Venture Fishery off Togiak

Rich Marasco briefly reviewed a report by Russ Nelson on the bycatch of prohibited species in the yellowfin sole/flatfish joint venture in Area 514 of the Bering Sea. The report, requested by the Council because of concerns over bycatch expressed by Togiak area residents, pointed out that the information is based on inseason estimates over a wide area. Data specific to Togiak will

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not be available until early 1988. Yellowfin sole and other flatfish species composed 94.6% of the total 138,000 mt groundfish catch, and the bycatch included 375 mt herring, 313 mt halibut, 563 salmon, 10,500 king crab, 39,423 C. bairdi Tanner crab, and 1.6 million other Tanner crab, almost all opilio.

Henry Mitchell suggested that when final data are available on the Togiak fishery, those involved in joint ventures there meet with Bristol Bay residents to explain their operations and present the data.

(c) MRC Trawl Development Experiment in Bristol Bay

Dr. Aron presented the most recent progress report on the experiment just conducted in the Bering Sea, a cooperative effort involving members of Marine Resources Company Int'l, Natural Resources Consultants, Northeast Trawl, and the Northwest & Alaska Fisheries Center. It gather information on how various trawl equipment performs and how bycatch can be reduced. Dr. Aron told the Council that the experiment was very successful and that films would be available at the next Council meeting. The crab industry had expressed concern over the crab bycatch, and Dr. Aron pointed out that strict limits were placed on bycatches, particularly red king crab and bairdi Tanner crab, and that the experiment was completed without reaching those limits. He also indicated that reaching those limits would not seriously harm the stocks. Dr. Aron said he would prefer to wait until the project's final report is completed before reviewing the final results.

Arni Thomson, Alaska Crab Coalition, reviewed his memo to the Council outlining the Coalitions concerns about the experiment. In their opinion, the experiment violated several acts of Congress along with the industry agreement incorporated by Amendment 10 into the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands FMP creating zones with bycatch limits for crab. The Coalition suggested the following five actions: (1) that the Council apply the bycatch from the S-K project to the operations in Zone 1 in 1988; (2) that the Council develop a procedure to include bycatches in all fisheries (i.e., experimental, exploratory, and scientific, as well as commercial) in the FMP bycatch restrictions; (3) that the Council develop standards and procedures to ensure that experimental, exploratory and scientific fishing activities are not substantive commercial ventures; (4) that NMFS should develop a process to ensure that S-K funds are not used to subsidize commercial ventures; and (5) that S-K proposals for cooperative fisheries research in Alaska come under the jurisdiction of NMFS-Alaska Region and AFDF.

Larry Cotter suggested the Council consider developing policy or guideline on how research projects of this kind can be conducted in the North Pacific. This type of research offers a good opportunity to obtain information, particularly in the absence of adequate government funding, but some guidelines should be developed to avoid the misunderstandings that have occurred during this project.

(d) Pilot Domestic Observer Program

Ron Dearborn reported that four observers have been hired and trained and sent to Dutch Harbor and Kodiak to begin working. Mr. Dearborn and the Council's Domestic Observer Committee met during Council week with industry to discuss their concerns, particularly with insurance. Mr. Dearborn told the Council

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that observers will only work on vessels with insurance and that Sea Grant can provide insurance riders at a relatively low cost. He will be contacting insurance experts to clarify how to obtain coverage most cost effectively.

Mr. McVey asked whether using an observer from the Council's program in the trawl fishery for Pacific ocean perch in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska would seriously affect coverage of other fisheries, and Mr. Dearborn replied that coverage in other fisheries is already fairly spread out and would be reduced further. Mr. McVey said he recalled that the Policy & Planning Committee had recommended that the Council consider his request for an observer in the POP fishery. The Council decided that Mr. Branson, Campbell and Dearborn would have the responsibility of making the decision.

C. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

C-1 Legislative Update

Plastics Pollution

Another bill implementing Annex V to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) was recently introduced. S. 1562, introduced by Senator Stevens on July 29, 1987, has been added to S. 560, S. 663, and H.R. 940 which also seek to implement Annex V. On September 16, the Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment and Coast Guard and Navigation Subcommittees of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee marked up H.R. 940. Title II of the bill, addressing entanglement and pollution problems associated with high seas driftnets, was deleted at the mark-up session.

Vessel Safety and Insurance Legislation

On September 16 the Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing on S. 849, a bill that seeks to set safety standards for commercial fishing vessels and provide compensation for injured fishermen. The Council family was briefed on this bill in May. No substantive changes to the legislation were proposed at the hearing. Mark-ups on the House vessel safety legislation, H.R. 1830 and H.R. 1841, are expected in the near future.

NMFS to Department of Agriculture or Department of Interior

While there is legislation pending that would establish NOAA as an independent agency--S. 330, S. 821 and H.R. 2135--some consideration is being given to moving NMFS out of the Department of Commerce. Senator Pat Leahy (D. VT) is reported to be working on legislation that would move NMFS to the Department of Agriculture and some members of the oceans sciences community reportedly are lobbying Congress to move the Service to the Department of Interior.

Seafood Inspections

Senator Pat Leahy is also preparing legislation that would require the Department of Agriculture to inspect all commercially processed fish products used for human consumption. Senator Leahy's bill may be similar to H.R. 1483, introduced earlier this year by Representative Dorgan, that also proposes to establish a mandatory seafood inspection program.

C-2 Secretary's Draft Uniform Standards

A copy of the revised Proposed 601 Regulations and 603/603 Guidelines prepared by the three inter-Council teams was mailed to Council members prior to the meeting. Council Chairmen will meet October 9-10 in Seattle to review the draft. Clarence Pautzke briefed the Council on the document and Don Bevan reviewed the work of the scientific team's meetings on definitions and preparation of resource assessment documents.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC recommends the Council support adoption of the proposed 601 Regulations and 602/603 guidelines as well as the schedule proposed for their implementation. The SSC especially supports replacing the Maximum Fishing Mortality (MFM) concept with an approach that uses biomass threshold and sets OY and ABC zero at stock abundance less than the threshold. They believe this sets a reasonable conservation standard preferable to MFM.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Mr. McVey said the Region has reservations with the threshold concept and the determination of MSY biomass and asked Dr. Bevan to provide more information. John Peterson also had concerns and asked what safeguards could be used to prevent stocks from approaching the threshold and the fishery being closed abruptly. He also suggested that the processing industry should be included in the document under section 603(e), paragraph 4(i).

C-3 Reporting Requirements

The Reporting Requirements Committee presented their report which recommended the following requirements for domestic catcher-processors and mothership-processors. The Committee suggested that the changes be implemented as soon as possible:

1. The weekly catch report should be augmented by at-sea transfer information.
2. Vessels should also maintain a cargo transfer/offloading log.
3. The above reports should be implemented as soon as possible.
4. Comparable information should be supplied by all processing entities in the same time frame.
5. To facilitate at-sea reporting and inspection the Workgroup recommends that
 - each vessel have on board the information submitted in the weekly catch report;
 - NMFS provide standardized conversion ranges and enforcement guidelines to the fleet; and

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- a comprehensive data gathering/data coordination plan (State-Federal) be prepared by NMFS and made available to the Council and the fleet.

In addition to the above recommendations, the Workgroup noted that

- the responsibility of the companies in maintaining accurate reporting forms should be emphasized;
- the specified tolerance for finished weight may vary by plus or minus 4% for enforcement purposes; and
- ADF&G fish tickets may not be federally required should the comprehensive data gathering plan adequately replace the fish ticket system.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Jon Pollard, NOAA-GC, told the Council that he believes the reporting requirements could still be included in Amendment 11 to the Bering Sea Groundfish plan even though it has already been forwarded for approval. The requirements could be included as an addendum and forwarded to the Secretary with Amendment 16 to the Gulf groundfish plan because the proposal for the regulations had been addressed by the Council and public comment taken during the Council's initial considerations of the amendments.

There was some discussion of whether up-to-date information can be obtained in fisheries with high bycatches, etc., without a daily catch log.

John Peterson moved to accept the recommendations of the Reporting Requirements Committee. The motion was seconded by Bob McVey.

John Winther moved to amend the motion to include the specified tolerance for enforcement purposes in the recommendations for plan amendment. The motion was seconded by Larry Cotter. Craig Hammond, NMFS-Enforcement told the Council that he and Mr. Pollard had discussed this issue and feel that the appropriate place to handle this would be in the enforcement guidelines and in the penalty guidelines that are part of their internal process. Mr. Winther withdrew his motion to amend.

Larry Cotter moved to amend the main motion to allow the Regional Director discretionary authority to, in consultation with the Council, require daily catch logs when a situation warrants it. The motion was seconded by Henry Mitchell but withdrawn after Council discussion.

John Peterson said that he feels this would be an unwarranted burden on industry. If information is needed quickly in a specific situation it can be obtained by radio. The weekly report is sufficient to do what NMFS wanted and to aid in enforcement.

The main motion carried with no objection.

Later in the meeting the Council was presented with the wording for regulations and FMP language to implement the recommendations of the Reporting

Requirements Committee for reporting requirements for catcher/processor vessels and motherships for both the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish FMPs. Some minor changes were made during Council discussion.

Bob Mace moved to adopt the regulations and changes to FMP language for both the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMPs as presented and amended. The motion was seconded by Don Collinsworth and carried with no objection.

C-4 Non-profit Fishery Research Foundation

On September 20, 1987 the third public forum was held to discuss the formation of a private non-profit fishery foundation. The steering committee reviewed the possibility of user fees being levied on the industry by Congress, possible foundation-financed research and data gathering projects, draft bylaws and articles of incorporation, and a general work plan.

After a general discussion it was the consensus of the committee and the audience that background material and a resolution regarding the formation of a foundation should be sent to all relevant fishing and processing associations. The associations are to approve or disapprove the resolution within 60 days and notify the steering committee of their actions. A meeting will be held in conjunction with the 1987 Fish Expo to provide an opportunity for association members to ask questions about the foundation concept. The steering committee intends to hold an organizational meeting in conjunction with the December 8-11, 1987 Council meeting to which all associations approving the resolution will be invited.

C-5 Permit Review Policy

The Policy & Planning Committee recommended in June not changing the Joint Venture Policy other than to add language expressing the Council's concern over unreported pollock catches in the international waters of the Bering Sea. On September 1 the Committee developed the following to be added as a third paragraph under the section, "Basis for Recommendations," of the Joint Venture Policy:

The Council remains very concerned about the catches of pollock and other species of fish in the international waters of the Bering Sea and the impact those catches will have on the overall stock abundance, particularly as it relates to the setting of harvest quotas in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. Any nation receiving directed allocations or operating in joint ventures off Alaska will be expected to provide timely, accurate, and verifiable data on their past, present, and projected catches of pollock and other species from the international waters in question, and to cooperate whenever possible in international research programs on those stocks.

The Committee also recommended conducting research on all Bering Sea pollock stocks and that the Council encourage a multi-nation approach to accomplish that research, perhaps through an organization such as PICES. They recommended that the Council urge the Department of State to work on a

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bilateral agreement with the Soviets for immediate control of effort in the international area.

The Council also received requests from the Western Alaska Cooperative Marketing Association to review bycatch problems in the inshore joint venture fishery for yellowfin sole near Togiak and from the Midwater Trawlers Cooperative to require joint venture companies to submit company bycatch control plans for the 1988 flounder fishery. A third request, from St. George Island Trust requesting a direct allocation of 175,000 mt of pollock for the use of Puffin Products in 1988, was withdrawn by St. George Island Trust and removed from the agenda.

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP unanimously recommended the Council adopt the Policy & Planning Committee's changes to the Joint Venture Policy. They also encouraged the Council to support U.S. participation in PICES and to encourage the State Department to pursue a bilateral agreement with the Soviets for immediate control of effort in the international waters of the Bering Sea.

The AP also urged the Council to review Western Alaska Cooperative Marketing Association's concerns with the inshore yellowfin sole fishery and recommended the Council require all midwater pollock fishermen to install operable cod end catch indicators through permit conditions.

Public Testimony

Edward Budzinski, Polish Embassy, Washington, D.C., told the Council that Poland had forwarded information on their catches in the international waters of the Bering Sea to the State Department. He agreed that the U.S. and Poland should cooperate in research of the stocks but that fish caught during that research should be sold to defray costs of the programs. He told the Council that if Poland could get their requested quotas, they could reduce their fishing effort in the "donut hole" area.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Research in International Waters of Bering Sea

Ed Wolfe told the Council that the State Department is proposing to governments of nations fishing in the "donut hole" that they negotiate agreements to exchange catch data. He assured the Council that the State and Commerce Departments are vigorously pursuing this objective. Mr. Wolfe re-emphasized to Mr. Budzinski that the State Department places a high degree of importance on their request for catch statistics from the international waters of the Bering Sea and urged him to request his government to respond to the State Department's request through diplomatic channels.

Henry Mitchell moved that the Council ask the State Department to request the nations fishing in the international waters of the Bering Sea to negotiate bilateral arrangements to supply the appropriate data on harvest levels and resources in the Bering Sea and that the Council recommend to the State Department that they support efforts to establish PICES and pursue a bilateral

agreement with the Soviet Union for immediate management of the fisheries in the international waters of the Bering Sea. The motion was seconded by Larry Cotter and carried unanimously.

Joint Venture Policy

Henry Mitchell moved to adopt the Policy & Planning Committee's recommendation to include the paragraph regarding pollock in the Bering Sea, including herring and salmon. The motion was seconded by Joe Blum and carried with Rudy Petersen objecting.

The Council stressed their intent to consider the cooperation of foreign countries in providing catch statistics in the international waters of the Bering when recommending approval or disapproval of permits or placing conditions on permits in the future.

Yellowfin Sole JVs off Togiak

The Western Alaska Cooperative Marketing Association wrote to the Council requesting a review of joint venture operations for yellowfin sole near Togiak to determine if they are damaging the environment and other commercial fisheries in the area.

Council members felt there was insufficient information to take definite action. More information will be available at the December Council meeting. Henry Mitchell suggested that joint venture representatives meet with Bristol Bay residents to explain their operations and provide data on bycatches.

C-6 Halibut Management

Don McCaughran, IPHC, updated the Council on the halibut season.

Mr. McCaughran said that the Commission requests the Council consider limited entry in some form for the halibut fishery and they feel that the share quota system would be the easiest one to implement; they ask that the halibut fishery be included in the consideration of limited entry for the sablefish fishery. Until the Council can implement limited entry for the fishery the Commission will have to consider other methods of control such as trip limits based on vessel size.

Report of the Halibut Management Team and RAAG

The Halibut Management Team and Regulatory Amendment Advisory Group (RAAG) reviewed and categorized 73 regulatory proposals received from the public. The proposals were categorized as follows:

No action required (9 proposals): proposals requiring no action because either there was no identifiable proposal stated, no action possible to accommodate the request, or the request was for status quo. The RAAG believes that status quo is always an option and does not warrant particular action.

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IPHC (21 proposals): categorized as most appropriate for consideration by the IPHC.

NPFMC (43 proposals): proposals determined to be allocative in nature, although the RAAG does not recommend Council action on all of them. Five types of proposals were received: 1. some form of limited entry (27); 2. bycatch of halibut in other directed fisheries (2); 3. exclusive registration areas (8); 4. gear limitation (6); 5. vessel size limitation (included in other proposals).

The Halibut RAAG recommended the following to the Council:

1. Consider halibut limited access along with that for sablefish or the entire groundfish complex.
2. Delay consideration of bycatch proposals until more comprehensive bycatch proposals, including limited access, are developed.
3. Consider establishing exclusive registration areas for one or more of the specific areas requested, but only after evaluating how such areas will bias future calculation of rights to initial allocations in a limited entry system and how to control the requests and pressure for many more such areas.
4. Defer consideration of gear limits until the IPHC acts upon similar proposals.
5. Take no action on vessel size limitations.

Halibut Goals and Allocations Policy

The Policy & Planning Committee recommended a policy statement and management goals for consideration of halibut regulations (see Appendix I to these minutes).

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC found that the halibut issues are largely allocative and are appropriate for AP and Council action at this time. If the issues are translated into action with the need for RIRs and EAs, the SSC warns that additional resources will be required or current work will have to be delayed.

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP voted to send out a revised version of the Halibut Management Goals for public comment with a vote on final approval in December. The revised version would change the words of goal #5 to read: "Assure that any resource allocation is fair and equitable to the fishermen concerned . . ." The AP also recommended that the halibut management proposals not be sent out for public review at this time. The AP recommended that the Council solicit proposals for calendar year 1989 by the late spring meeting of 1988; this would allow staff to develop analyses over the summer and action to send out appropriate proposals for public review could be taken by the Council at the September meeting with final action at the December meeting.

Public Testimony

Foster Husoy, Chairman of the Conference Board of the IPHC. Mr. Husoy said that the Canadian government's major concern is that their fishermen are fishing the same stocks as U.S. fishermen and they are concerned about the high rates of halibut bycatch in other fisheries. He asked that when the Council considers halibut regulations they will keep this in mind and make decisions which will conserve halibut stocks.

Bob Alverson, FVOA. Mr. Alverson supports the AP's position as it relates to the requests for limited entry in the halibut fishery, bycatch issues, gear limitation and vessel size limit issues. He also agreed with the AP's recommended change to the halibut management goals and suggestion that they go out for review and be adopted in December. Mr. Alverson cautioned that if the Council adopts exclusive registration areas future limited entry rights may be prejudiced.

Dean Adams, President, FVOA. The call for halibut management proposals came during a fishing season. Their group is very interested in halibut limited entry and hope that proposals submitted will cover their interests. He doesn't like the trip limit concept.

Mark Lundsten, FVOA. Would like to see some allocation scheme which would recognize the need for diversification but does not encourage more development in the harvesting sector and possibly encourages development of the processing sector. He's against exclusive registration areas and trip limits. Management decisions should be based on conservation needs. The limited entry concept should be started right now for halibut and all related fisheries but sablefish can't wait -- don't hold up sablefish limited entry to include halibut and groundfish fisheries.

Perfenia Pletnikof, Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association. They have submitted a proposal for an exclusive registration area. By creating Area 4D the Commission just gave big boats another place to fish and they got an excessive share. All their Association is asking for is equal access to the fishery. If exclusive registration is not acceptable to the Council, then trip limits would be another possibility. IPHC set trip limits last year in the area but said they could not promise the same this year.

Chuck Kekoni, Assoc. of Alaska Halibut Fishermen. In the past they have been opposed to limited entry. If the Council has to address limited entry, area registration is probably something that would protect the smaller fisherman; trip limits by vessel size is also a way of limiting the amount of quota all coming in at the same time. It would be best if limited entry permits did not accrue a value.

John Bruce, President, Deep Sea Fishermen's Union. Support the AP's recommendations on the halibut management goals. Their union has supported some form of effort limitation for some time but they do not support trip limits.

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Mark Snigaroff, Atka Fishermen's Assoc. Their small boat fishery has been developing since 1984. If they are given enough time to harvest the resources they could make it a viable fishery. Asked that the Council send out their request for an exclusive registration area for public review.

Jeffrey L. Withers, St. George Island Fisheries. There should be more enforcement of halibut regulations in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands. Can't support limited entry for halibut in the Bering Sea at this time but if it does happen, suggested that licenses not have a resale value.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Halibut Allocations Policy & Management Goals

Larry Cotter moved to approve the Halibut Allocations Policy & Management Goals recommended by the Policy & Planning Committee, as amended by the Advisory Panel. The motion was seconded by John Winther and carried with no objection.

Halibut Regulatory Proposals

John Winther moved to adopt the AP's recommendation - not to send proposals out for public review at this time but to solicit proposals for calendar year 1989. The motion was seconded by Joe Blum.

Bob McVey moved to amend the motion to read, "except that those allocation regimes for IPHC Areas 4C and 4E implemented in 1987 by IPHC be released by the Council for public review." The motion to amend was seconded by Larry Cotter and carried, 7 to 4, with Blum, Mace, R. Petersen and J. Peterson voting against.

The main motion, as amended, failed, 6 to 5, with Blum, McVey, R. Petersen, J. Peterson and Winther voting in favor.

Henry Mitchell pointed out that if the Council does not send out these regimes for public review the fishermen in the Nelson Island and Pribilof areas will be effectively shut out of the fishery because IPHC has said they cannot do the same for them this year as they did last.

Bob McVey moved that the allocative portions of IPHC Areas 4C and 4E management regimes implemented in 1987 by IPHC be released by the Council for public review. The motion was seconded by John Winther and carried, 7 to 4, with Blum, Mace, R. Petersen and J. Peterson voting against.

Bob Mace moved that no other halibut regulatory proposals be sent out for public review, recognizing that exclusive registration may have an adverse impact on any future limited entry system. The motion was seconded by Rudy Petersen and carried, 7 to 4, with Collinsworth, Cotter, Dyson and Mitchell voting against.

C-7 Sablefish Management

Fifty-nine proposals were received in response to the Council's call for sablefish management options in May. The proposals fell into five categories: status quo, conventional methods, license limitation, share quota, and unconventional methods. The groundfish plan teams prepared a synopsis of proposals for each category and an outline of considerations for controlled access programs.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC did not wish to comment at this time but pointed out that if these issues are translated into action with the need for RIRs and EAs, additional resources will be required or current work will have to be delayed.

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP encouraged the Council to direct preparation of an analysis of two management options--license limitation and share quota system, recognizing that as the analyses proceed there may be changes in the options themselves or the number of options considered.

Public Testimony

Bob Alverson, FVOA. In favor of the Council having a share quota system developed for Council and industry consideration. Feels it is very important for the Council to make a decision on this issue at this meeting. Because the process may take longer than anticipated, he suggested the Council may wish to consider a moratorium on entry into the sablefish fishery while a system is being developed and implemented. Halibut limited entry could be taken up at the same time if it doesn't delay progress with the sablefish system.

Cindy Lowry, Greenpeace. Greenpeace is concerned about the harassment of killer whales during the black cod fishery. They proposed a one-year experimental closure of black cod longlining in the area south of 55°N latitude and east of 168°W longitude with an evaluation of the effect of the closure at the Council's fall 1988 meeting.

John Coyne, Arctic Select Seafoods. Commenting on Ms. Lowry's presentation, Mr. Coyne said they would be glad to provide space on one of their vessels for a person to research the killer whale/black cod problem, or any other type of research the Council would like. He doesn't think limited entry is needed for the sablefish fishery in the Bering Sea and asked the Council to consider Gulf and Bering Sea sablefish management schemes separately.

Mike McCune, Alaskan Fisheries. Their main concern is the overcapitalization of the hook and line fisheries and its effect on processors. It's difficult to handle product when it is caught and delivered during such short seasons. Until limited entry can be implemented he asked the Council to consider requiring boats to deliver dressed fish which will increase quality and slow down the catch rates.

Mark Lundsten, FVOA. There is a need for rational limitation of effort in the black cod fishery. The fleet has become a multi-species fleet and is relying

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on multi-species more than ever before. Any kind of a functional limited entry system would require an enormous cut-back of vessels. Encouraged the Council to focus on sablefish at this time but keep in mind that the whole groundfish complex needs to be considered in the near future.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Don Collinsworth encouraged research on the killer whale-black cod problem and asked that NMFS brief the Council on any research now underway or planned. Mr. McVey suggested that the Marine Mammal Lab at the Northwest & Alaska Fisheries Center would be able to give a report to the Council.

Council action on sablefish was taken during the discussion of Agenda item C-9, "Future of Groundfish Management."

C-8 Dittman Survey

Mr. Dave Dittman reported on his recent survey of the groundfish industry and on his review of the surveys by the North Pacific Longline Coalition and the North Pacific Fishery Coalition. He said that the North Pacific Longline Coalition's survey was good and its findings would be worth consideration by the Council. The North Pacific Fishery Coalition's survey had a lower response rate than the Longline Coalition's survey, but because he only had the questionnaire to review and not the responses, Mr. Dittman could not comment other than to say there was nothing on the questionnaire that would cast doubt on their findings.

In the Dittman survey, 82 processors and 408 harvesters were interviewed over the telephone, and responses were basically similar with both groups favoring some type of limitation of access to the groundfish fisheries off Alaska. The final report of the study was mailed to Council family members and is available at the Council office.

C-9 Future of Groundfish Management

On September 1-2 the Policy & Planning Committee approved for Council consideration a draft statement of commitment for the future groundfish management. The statement combined an earlier Council recommendation to develop limited access for the sablefish longline fishery with a Council intent to study and implement some alternative management to traditional measures for all the groundfish fisheries of the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea by 1990.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC supports the activities undertaken by the Council to address this topic; time did not permit further SSC consideration of this agenda item.

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP presented a revised Statement of Commitment for approval by the Council. The revised statement included several editorial changes, the establishment of a workgroup to consider the need for and impacts of

alternative management techniques for groundfish, and deleted the portion of Item 2 beginning with "Concurrent with . . . "

Public Testimony

Pete Granger, American High Seas Fisheries Assn. If limited entry is going to be seriously pursued, then he suggested the three following considerations: (1) the effective cut-off date should be at the earliest possible time to hold down speculation; (2) a deadline for resolution of the issue should be set; (3) broad-based industry participation in the process is critical.

Ted Evans, AFTA, and John Wedin, PSPA. They support the AP recommendation and cannot support a moratorium because it would harm the Americanization of the groundfish fleet. If the Council adopts a moratorium that would include factory trawlers, the Council should at the same time ban foreign processors from the EEZ.

Oliver Holm, Kodiak Longliners' Assn., submitted a written statement. He feels it is premature to limit participation in the Alaska groundfish fisheries at this time because harvesting, politics of allocation and markets are dominated by joint venture harvesters and their foreign partners. He suggested that if the Council is seriously considering limited entry, that public comments be solicited and that the bottomfish fishery close to new entrants on the beginning of the first management year in which there would be no foreign fishing or processing.

Joe Easley, Chairman of the Pacific Council, briefed the Council on the Pacific Council's recent efforts in limiting entry to their groundfish fisheries.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Larry Cotter briefed the Council on his proposed alternative for Gulf of Alaska sablefish management to make Pacific cod the primary target fishery and allow bycatches of sablefish and halibut.

The Council discussed the Advisory Panel's recommended changes to the Statement of Commitment. John Peterson said that such a change in the management regime needs to have full industry support and all aspects must be studied. The Statement of Commitment should not be restricted to license limitation and share quota systems but should be amenable to other methods of traditional management and new, or "unconventional" methods such as suggested by Larry Cotter. He also suggested the possibility of an approach where a system is implemented on an experimental basis. Mr. Blum agreed that there must be study and industry participation but stressed that the need for an end point where definite action can be expected.

John Peterson moved to approve the Statement of Commitment as amended by the Advisory Panel. The motion was seconded by Bob Mace.

John Winther moved to amend the motion to re-insert paragraph 2(c) dealing with the cut-off dates. The motion to amend was seconded by Henry Mitchell.

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The motion to amend carried, 6 to 5, with Blum, Mace, McVey, R. Petersen and J. Peterson voting against.

The main motion carried, 9 to 2, with Collinsworth and Mitchell voting against.

The Council also discussed whether or not to include halibut in the management regimes being developed for sablefish. It was the consensus that consideration of limited access alternatives for sablefish should not be delayed by trying to include halibut now, but any system that is developed should be flexible enough to incorporate halibut in the future. Mr. Branson told the Council that the staff will proceed as quickly as possible with sablefish and at the same time will work with the IPHC to develop halibut fishery profiles and statistics. He will let the Council know in December whether or not halibut could be incorporated into the sablefish project without slowing it down.

C-10 Report of the Bycatch Committee

Larry Cotter reported that the Committee is still working on recommendations for the Council and is close to a developing a concept relative to crab issues in the Bering Sea.

D. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

D-1 Salmon FMP

Dale Evans, NMFS-AKR, told the Council that the Region is currently working on the plan with a draft expected for Council review at their April 1988 meeting.

D-2 Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Crab FMP

The Council was mailed a copy of the draft Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Crab fishery management plan prior to the Council meeting. The Crab Management Committee had voted 6 to 2 in a previous meeting to forward the FMP to the Council for consideration.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC had several problems with the draft plan. They felt that the need for flexibility of the regulatory program had not been adequately addressed in the draft, that management measures other than inseason management should be analyzed, and had problems with the management objectives and strategies proposed to attain them. [See SSC Minutes, Appendix I, for full comments.] The SSC concluded that the plan is not ready to be released for public review and suggested that the plan team and Committee prepare a new draft for SSC review during a special meeting prior to the December Council meeting.

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP recommended the draft plan go out for public comment. On another crab management matter, the AP recommended the Council review the ADF&G regulation requiring crab gear removal within seven days for safety reasons.

Public Testimony

Bob Alverson, FVOA. It is not their intention to tell crab fishermen how to conduct their business, but FVOA's major concerns are: (1) that any plan must satisfy the National Standards of the MFCMA; (2) that there must be an adequate appeals procedure to the Secretary of Commerce (he noted that the current draft has gone a long way toward satisfying these two concerns); (3) that the best scientific information available be the crux of any plan. In light of the SSC's comments and concerns, FVOA would prefer the old plans on king and Tanner crab be used to allow for the flexibility of the Council and Secretary of Commerce in management of crab.

Thorn Smith NPFVOA, and industry panel: Ted Evans (AFTA), Steve Hughes (Midwater Trawlers), Pete Granger (AHSFA), Bert Larkins (MRCI), Mick Stevens (ProFish), Chris Hansen (Coalition for Open Ocean Fisheries), Hugh Reilly, Fred Yeck. Cannot support the current plan because it would delegate to the State of Alaska critical authority to change size limits, select guideline harvest levels, set seasons, and conduct inseason management without establishing meaningful criteria or procedures for action. Involvement of the Board of Fisheries, all Alaskan residents, would deny out-of-state fisherman representation.

Arni Thomson (ACC), and Jeff Stephan (UFMA). They support putting the current draft plan out for public review. Prefer not to have to deal with two management agencies. Jeff Stephan said that they would have preferred the Joint Statement of Principles, but support sending the draft plan out for public review.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Larry Cotter suggested the plan be put back on its original time schedule so that the plan team and Committee can address the SSC's concerns. The plan would be reviewed by the SSC at a special meeting prior to the December Council meeting and then submitted to the Council for approval to be sent out for public review.

Larry Cotter moved that the Council return the crab FMP development to its original schedule and instruct the plan team and Crab Management Committee to prepare a new draft for the January 1988 Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Bob McVey and carried with no objection.

Council members discussed the possibility of preparing a plan which included two sets of alternatives -- one for straight federal management and one deferring management to the State, or a side-by-side comparison of where the plan would differ with State or federal management. Mr. McVey pointed out that the environmental assessment will present two alternatives which will include the federal aspect.

Don Collinsworth stressed that the State is willing to accommodate a partnership relationship with the Council and federal government in managing crab resources in the Bering Sea. However, they have few resources to manage crab in the EEZ and will require an agreeable arrangement among the three entities - State, Council, and federal government; they're not interested in taking "adverse possession."

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D-3 Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP

(a) Amendment 16

Amendment 16, containing two topics: a revised definition of "prohibited species," and an update of the plan's description sections and reorganization of the plan's chapters to incorporate current Council policy, was sent out for public review following the May Council meeting. No comments were received.

Terry Smith told the Council that the reporting requirements previously reviewed for both the Gulf groundfish FMP and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands FMP, if approved by the Council at this meeting, can be incorporated in Amendment 16 at this time.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC endorsed approval of Amendment 16 with some editorial changes. (See Appendix I for complete text.)

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP recommended approval of Amendment 16 although they were concerned that several data bases used in the document, particularly for rockfish and POP, are based on 1984 data.

The AP urged the Council to direct the plan team to address the confusion surrounding the NMFS regulation regarding the definition of directed fishing. The definition indicates that if the catch of a given species exceeds 20% then the operation is assumed to be targeting; however there is some confusion as to what figure the 20% applies -- of each tow, the daily catch, or the total catch on board.

(b) Resource Assessment Document and Initial TACs and Apportionments for 1988

Surveys of Gulf of Alaska stocks have been completed but because the data are still unanalyzed the plan team was unable to provide new estimates of biomass. Estimates of pollock biomass were not available this year because of equipment failure during an independent hydroacoustic survey. The team will meet in November to develop biomass estimates for species other than pollock and prepare an updated Resource Assessment Document for the December Council meeting.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC had the following comments on the status of stocks in the RAD. (For complete comments, see Appendix I.)

Pollock. No 1987 estimate of biomass is available because of failure of hydroacoustic survey gear. An ABC based on MSY calculations would probably be higher than the 200,000 proposed by the plan team. The recommended ABC does not create a decrease in the population trend under an average recruitment scenario for the 1985 year class. This estimate applies to Shelikof Strait and does not include possible concentrations

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of pollock to the west and east. Further research or experimental fishing may be warranted to provide data for assessing these concentrations, if there are any.

Pacific Cod. The SSC accepted the new method of estimating MSY used by the team and the recommended ABC range of 111,000-206,900 mt. A breakdown of ABC by regulatory area is not necessary because it is assumed that Pacific cod is a single stock in the Gulf; however, TAC by regulatory area may be of use in preventing heavy exploitation in any one area.

Flounder. The SSC accepted the team's approach in calculating the ABC using the $F_{0.1}$ exploitation rate to set ABC at 537,000 mt.

Rockfish (Sebastes). The SSC recommended that the determination of TACs by management area is necessary to prevent overharvesting of stock components. They recommended ABCs as follows: 2,520 mt-Western area; 3,465 mt-Central area; and 4,515 mt-Eastern area. They also recommended the team investigate risks of overharvesting and geographic distribution of fishing on rockfish populations.

The Team's recommended ABC of 625 mt for shelf demersal rockfish in the Southeast Alaska-Outside district was based on data not available to the SSC. The SSC needs this information to assess the recommendation of the team.

Thornyhead. The Team's recommended ABC of 3,750 mt is based on an exploitation rate of 4.5% from MSY calculations. Details of these analyses were not included in the RAD.

Sablefish. The SSC accepted a preliminary ABC of 25,000 mt recommended by the Team. The SSC also concurred that the ABC should be apportioned to management areas according to biomass in each area. The Team will incorporate new information and analyses from 1987 into the revised RAD.

Halibut PSC. The SSC accepted the Team's report.

Report of the Advisory Panel

The AP received their RAD documents the morning of their meeting and found it difficult to provide a thorough review. The AP requested that the Council direct the staff/team to deliver the RAD documents to AP members at least five working days prior to a meeting. After receiving the plan team report on the RAD and recognizing that there will be additional data which will be analyzed prior to the December meeting, the AP voted to accept the plan teams' recommended ABCs and to recommend the Council use those numbers for the preliminary TACs for public review. In light of expected changes in data between now and the December meeting the AP refrained from recommending apportionments for DAP, JVP and TALFF.

After substantial discussion of the confusion over federal and state roles in the management of rockfish in the Gulf for 1988 the AP urged the Council to recommend that staff from NMFS and ADF&G work out the issues not covered in the RAD or FMP and provide the Council with a written response.

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Public Testimony

Rockfish Management

Bill Orr, Alaska Factory Trawlers. They have concerns over the expanded management role of the State of Alaska in management of shelf demersal rockfish assemblages in the Gulf as outlined in Amendment 16. Experience in the 1987 fishery shows there is still confusion over the management roles of the state, NMFS, and the Council and this should be clarified in the FMP; if the roles in Amendment 16 differ from those outlined in Amendment 14 then the issue should be further analyzed and reviewed.

Status of Stocks/ABCs:

Bill Orr, Alaska Factory Trawlers. The method used by the plan team to determine ABC is new and some of the results vary from and may result in lower fishing quotas in contrast to actual fishing results, particularly in the Other Rockfish category. Observers should be used or additional sampling done.

Mick Stevens, ProFish Int'l. Asked that the Council provide a TQ for 1988 for the possibility of an experimental fishery during the roe season in the western region outside Shelikof Strait.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

The Council decided to proceed as last year and set ABC to equal TAC as preliminary figures for public review since updated stock information will be available at the December meeting and the Council will also have information from the NMFS survey on DAP.

Bob Mace Moved to send out the ABCs recommended by the Plan Team and last year's TQs for public review. The motion was seconded by Larry Cotter and carried with no objection (Mark Pedersen sitting in for Blum; Ken Parker Collinsworth's alternate was absent for the vote). The Council asked that the table sent out for public review also include 1987 DAP and JVP figures. See APPENDIX II for the final table.

Halibut PSC

Larry Cotter moved to send the 1987 Halibut PSCs out for public review for the preliminary figures for 1988 (See Appendix II). (Mark Pedersen sitting in for Blum; Ken Parker, Collinsworth's alternate, was absent for the vote).

D-4 Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish

(a) Status of Stocks (RAD) and Initial Apportionments for 1988

Plan Team Report

The Plan Team used the new definition of ABC adopted by the Council to calculate ABCs for many species in the RAD.

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Pollock. Recommended ABC of 1,410,000 mt for the Eastern Bering Sea and 160,000 mt for the Aleutians. The increase in ABC is a result of using a higher exploitation rate. The abundance of stocks has not changed radically from last year and abundance remains relatively high.

Pacific Cod. The recommended ABC of 326,000 mt, a decrease from 400,000 mt in 1987, reflects changes to the age composition of the resource as well as an initial over-projection of the 1987 biomass. However, trawl surveys show that the biomass of cod remains high and above 1 million mt.

Yellowfin Sole. The recommended ABC of 216,000 mt (up slightly from 187,000 mt in 1987) reflects a slightly higher biomass and the use of a higher exploitation rate.

Greenland Turbot. The recommended ABC of 19,000 mt, slightly less than last year, reflects the use of a different exploitation scenario than last year. The resource has continued to decline from last year and is projected to remain low for many years because of progressively poor recruitment.

Arrowtooth Flounder. An actual increase in the biomass and the use of a higher exploitation rate resulted in a substantially increased ABC of 109,500 mt (1987 ABC was 30,900 mt). The resource remains in excellent condition and the biomass is increasing.

Other Flatfish. Recommended ABC of 440,700. As with Arrowtooth Flounder, both a higher exploitation rate and actual increase in the biomass accounted for the increase from 193,300 mt in 1987.

Sablefish. A higher abundance of stocks and the use of a higher MSY exploitation rate resulted in slightly increased ABCs: Eastern Bering Sea-3,900 mt, and Aleutians-6,700 mt.

Pacific Ocean Perch. Recommended ABC of 6,000 mt - Eastern Bering Sea, and 16,600 mt - Aleutians. The slight increases over last year reflect a higher abundance of stocks because of stronger recruitment.

Other Rockfishes. Slight decreases in the recommended ABCs of 400 mt for the Eastern Bering Sea and 1,100 mt for the Aleutians do not reflect a decline in the biomass. They reflect a lower confidence in the reliability of biomass estimates since the trawl surveys cannot sample rockfishes very well.

Atka Mackerel. The decrease from the 1987 ABC of 30,800 mt to the 1988 recommended ABC of 21,000 mt reflects a lower abundance of stocks.

Squid. Because of insufficient information to determine changes in the abundance of stocks the plan team recommended the same conservative ABC for 1988 as was used in 1987 - 10,000 mt.

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Other Species. An increased ABC of 59,000 mt reflects the plan team's determination that the present biomass level can be exploited at MSY.

Report of the Scientific and Statistical Committee

[For complete SSC comments, see Appendix I]

Pollock. The team was requested to clarify parts of the analyses as it was not always clear which definition or estimate of exploitable and total biomass were being used in the alternative calculations of ABC. The also recommended that the team carry out additional analyses to obtain a better estimate of the MSY exploitation rate. The SSC recommended a range between 1,410,000 mt and 2,820,000 mt for pollock ABC in the Bering Sea and between 160,000 mt and 320,000 mt in the Aleutian Islands.

Pacific cod. The SSC did not recommend basing ABC on an estimate of annual surplus production and recommended that the team calculate an MSY exploitation rate from available data and apply it to the biomass estimate to obtain an ABC value. The resulting cod ABC would be between 326,000 mt and 700,000 mt for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Yellowfin sole. The SSC recommended a range of 257,000 mt and 349,000 mt for the yellowfin sole ABC in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Greenland turbot. The SSC endorsed the plan team's recommendation of a 19,000 mt ABC for Greenland turbot in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Arrowtooth flounder. The SSC endorsed the plan team's recommendation of a 109,500 mt ABC for Arrowtooth flounder in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Other flatfish. The SSC endorsed the plan team's recommendation of a 440,700 mt ABC for other flatfish in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Sablefish. The SSC recommended a higher exploitation rate be used to calculate the sablefish ABC. A 12% exploitation rate would result in a recommended ABC of 6,800 mt in the Bering Sea and 11,600 mt in the Aleutian Islands.

Pacific ocean perch. The SSC endorsed the plan team's recommended ABC of 6,000 mt in the Bering Sea and 16,600 mt in the Aleutian Islands.

Other rockfish. The SSC endorsed the plan team's recommended ABC of 400 mt in the Bering Sea and 1,100 mt in the Aleutian Islands.

Atka mackerel. The SSC endorsed the plan team's recommended ABC of 21,000 mt in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

Squid and Other Species. There was no new data available; the SSC did not comment on an appropriate ABC.

Public Testimony

Bob Alverson, FVOA. Asked the Council to support a proposal for \$200,000 for Orca research in the Bering Sea/Aleutians.

Mick Stevens, ProFish Int'l. Supports the ABCs suggested by the SSC. Not a good idea to send out overly high or low estimates; if the Council wants to adjust in December, then adjust the TACs, not ABCs.

Hugh Reilly, Fred Yeck, Barry Fisher, Thorn Smith. The Council has an obligation to manage for full utilization of the resources and maximum economic value of the resources to the United States. The 2 million metric ton cap in the Bering Sea is an artificial one and prevents the Council for fulfilling this obligation. If the cap is not raised it will curtail fishing and force fishermen to look for other jobs. Suggested the Council consider an emergency rule to raise the cap.

Bert Larkins, Marine Resources. Concurred with the testimony of the previous industry group. If the cap is not raised the Council will have the problem of deciding who gets fish and who does not and will leave a lot of fish unharvested. Also suggested that the Council consider providing at least 10% of the yellowfin sole TAC for bycatch in the Other Flounder category.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Rudy Petersen moved to send out for public review the SSC's recommended ABCs for 1988. The motion was seconded by Bob Mace and carried 7 to 4, with Cotter, Mitchell, J. Peterson, and Winther voting against.

The Council wished to stress the fact that they are still constrained by the 2.0 million mt cap for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands even though the figures being sent out for public review exceed that amount.

Larry Cotter moved to send out for public review the 1987 TACs as preliminary TACs for 1988. The motion was seconded by Rudy Petersen and carried with no objection. The Council also asked staff to include this year's apportionments and catch-to-date figures in the table going out for public review. The final table for public review is found in Appendix III.

Pollock data gathering in the Bering Sea.

The Council also discussed a plan for collecting data on the pollock stocks by joint venture operations in the Bering Sea. The American High Seas Fisheries Assn. requested the Council to consider providing a letter in support of their plans.

Bob Mace moved to endorse a cooperative data gathering effort between the Northwest & Alaska Fisheries Center and interested segments of the joint venture fleet in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands. The motion was seconded by Henry Mitchell and carried with no objection.

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COUNCIL MEETING

Bycatch Guidelines for the Bering Sea Joint Venture Flounder Fishery.

Several industry groups represented by Al Burch, Steve Hughes, Barry Fisher, Bert Larkins, Fred Yeck, and Mick Stevens presented a plan for bycatch guidelines in the 1988 Bering Sea joint venture flounder fishery. The plan was devised to try to insure that "cleaner" operations are not penalized by "dirtier" operations. Working within the parameters set out in Amendment 10 to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands FMP, the group proposed procedures for checking company performance throughout the fishery and guidelines for moving operations out of certain zones when they exceed the allowed percentages at the various checkpoints.

They suggested the Council sponsor a hearing on the proposal during Fish Expo in Seattle to allow public input on the proposal.

John Peterson moved that the Council go on record stating it intends to hold individual joint venture company operations and/or participating fishermen independently accountable, by emergency rule, permit condition, or both, for crab bycatch in the 1988 Bering Sea flounder fishery and that a Council subcommittee be established to develop the proposed guidelines in a public meeting on or about October 27 in Seattle for implementation at the December Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Rudy Petersen and carried with no objection.

Changing the upper limit of the OY in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

The Council discussed raising the upper limit of the OY in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands. Jon Pollard, NOAA-GC, told the Council they could accomplish this by proposing an emergency rule which could be in place by January 1988 and effective for 180 days. The emergency rule would then be followed by a plan amendment to take effect before the emergency rule expired. He cautioned the Council that he was not sure whether NOAA would consider this an emergency, however. He also suggested the Council could begin working on an amendment immediately and approve it at the December meeting; then the Council could set TACs within the 2 million cap but would have the option of raising them when the amendment became effective later in the year.

Jim Campbell stressed that if the Council doesn't take action at this meeting then the opportunity will be lost under the time constraints. It will be necessary to advertise this as an action item for the December meeting if they wish to consider it.

Henry Mitchell said that in light of expanded information on the resources he is afraid that the Council will be challenged for not make full utilization of the nation's resources if they do not consider raising the cap.

John Peterson said he feels the Council should know more about the way the plan team arrived at the new numbers in the RAD before considering raising the cap. The Council took no action to put this issue on the December agenda.

Jon Pollard mentioned that there would be a possibility of a Secretarial amendment if the Secretary determines that it is necessary and that the Council has not acted on it.

E. CONTRACTS, PROPOSALS AND FINANCIAL REPORT

Report of the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee recommended approval of the SSC's prioritized programmatic projects for 1988, as follows:

1. Development of limited access system for \$200,000.
2. Domestic Observer program for \$200,000.
3. Evaluation of alternative management strategies for Alaska king and Tanner crab fisheries for \$50,000.
4. Bering Sea pollock stock structure studies for \$45,000.
5. System design and program development for integration of state and federal data bases for \$100,000.
6. Support recommendation of Pacific Fishery Management Council's SSC for funding of trawl mesh selection study. (no money involved)

The Finance Committee also recommended extending Alaska Sound Labs' contract for sound and recording of Council meetings for three years.

John Peterson moved to accept the recommendations of the Finance Committee.
The motion was seconded by Bob Mace and carried with no objection.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ted Evans, Alaska Factory Trawlers Assn., wished to comment further on the Council's Statement of Commitment for the groundfish fisheries. He feels that publishing the December 31, 1987 cut-off date will create a cloud on anyone having a vessel entering the fishery after that date or having vessels under construction or contracted for after that date. Although it is not a final Council action it will have a big impact on the industry. He requested that in view of the serious adverse economic impact which may be created by this action, that the Council remove the December 31, 1987 date from the Statement of Commitment and reconsider it at the December Council meeting so that affected industry will have a chance to comment.

G. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Campbell adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:25 p.m. on Friday, September 25.