

Status report on 2/5/15 NPFMC/IPHC meeting issues for further consideration

Issue for further consideration	Action	Primary Responsibility
1. The need to review and update DMRs for all fisheries, including development of a table which summarizes current DMRs, how the rates were derived for each fishery, and the level of 'certainty' (if possible) associated with each DMR.	Underway - IPHC staff currently developing table per request. Some info will be in BSAI PSC analysis. Will need to coordinate with Observer Program to promulgate potential changes, which are in regulation.	IPHC (Council and NMFS follow up)
2. Recognizing that the Commission has its own scientific review process, the Council expressed a desire for the Council's SSC to review ongoing research by the IPHC under an NPRB grant, and for the SSC to review (when appropriate) the ongoing development of the Commission's total mortality accounting approach (including the application of Spawning Potential Ratio (SPR) and associated management implications).	Ongoing – SSC (and Council) will have opportunity for review as updated documents become available.	IPHC
3. Both bodies recognize that there are potential benefits to abundance-based management of all removals from the halibut stock and supported continued investigation of this approach.	Council requested discussion paper on abundance-based limits – IPHC already working on updating their February 2015 paper, which will be available for review at June 2015 meeting. This will serve as discussion paper and Council can provide direction and next steps in June.	IPHC (at least until June 2015 Council meeting)
4. The need to further reconcile bycatch and wastage accounting and calculation between the Commission and NMFS, and identify any implications for setting TCEY.	Ongoing - Meeting between NMFS/IPHC staff is being scheduled for the spring, to further define appropriate procedures for using NMFS data in IPHC process. Spatial resolution needed.	IPHC/ NMFS/AKFIN
5. Further information on the IPHC 'closed area', including implications with regard to potential changes in that closed area (i.e., area allocations, access to the area, and associated changes to existing catch share plans).	If the closed area were to be eliminated or modified, there will be implications for Council management of IFQ fisheries and the Area 4CDE CSP, which would require Council examination. The IPHC has discussed but not moved forward with changing the closed area for directed halibut fishing. The Council has not initiated any action to consider closing this area to other gear groups.	N/A (unless IPHC decides to pursue elimination or modifications for directed halibut fishing).
6. The need to address the 'tendering' issue in the GOA as it relates to application of observer coverage.	Council has initiated an amendment to address this issue, but it is currently on hold. The Observer Annual Report (June 2015) will evaluate whether there is a bias apparent in the data for 2014. The Council has also initiated a discussion paper on 100% observer coverage in the GOA (for June 2015).	Council
7. The need to further refine a common understanding of science and process, as well as a common vocabulary (for example, Blue Line vs ABC).	Ongoing – IPHC developing an expanded 'glossary'; more information will be included in the BSAI Halibut PSC analysis.	IPHC/Council

B1 Status Report on Joint Meeting of NPFMC/IPHC 2-5-15
APRIL 2015

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8. Recognition that, subject to stock conservation, it is a domestic choice of how to allocate available halibut in each country's waters.	No action required. However, see #11 which refers to determining the point at which allocation becomes conservation issue.	N/A
9. A coordinated prioritization of research in areas of mutual concern.	Ongoing dialogue related to several issues. Potential subject for future joint meeting.	IPHC/NMFS And Council
10. A recognition of the potential benefits of IBQ type management programs for effecting bycatch reductions.	No specific action required	Council
11. A lack of understanding of migration of halibut makes it difficult to determine the extent to which bycatch is an allocation vs conservation issue, and determine the relative impacts across all management areas (and the desire to prioritize migration research).	Ongoing research by IPHC, spatial modelling, etc. relates to item #9. Key issue is recognition that halibut movement out of BSAI areas creates extended impacts of management actions in BSAI in those other areas.	IPHC
12. The importance of the Council's BSAI bycatch decision (this year) relative to the Commission's decisions in 2016.	Council scheduling final action for June 2015.	Council
13. Potential Council review of its management objectives relative to the directed halibut fisheries.	Ongoing, Council can review indirectly through its annual programmatic review of goals and objectives, or possibly consider specific review (in conjunction with MSA mandated review of IFQ program?)	Council
14. Reconciliation of survey information for Area 4B relative to observations from fishermen.	Ongoing, through IPHC research, discussions with Area 4B fishermen, and targeted survey of Area 4B in 2016	IPHC
15. Potential development of monitoring standards for all fisheries, including directed halibut fisheries.	Ongoing - Council/NMFS working on monitoring standards through groundfish/halibut observer program and EM. No specific plan to jointly develop such standards with IPHC.	Council/NMFS
16. Recognition of the potential disparities between the fishery and management contexts when making comparisons to bycatch reductions in Area 2B and U.S. west coast fisheries (apples and oranges) relative to managing expectations (a discussion paper providing appropriate context for comparisons might be useful)	No action required, but short discussion paper may provide useful context. NMFS/Council staff developing in time for next IPHC cycle and/or next joint meeting. Will look at starting points for each program, relative improvements, and overall rates (for example)	NMFS/Council
17. Development of a more formal meeting schedule, or possible Joint Protocol, between the Council and the Commission.	Part of ongoing dialogue. Should be issue driven, rather than routine. Will assess in fall 2015 to determine need for next joint meeting.	shared
18. Potential direction to staff and/or Plan Teams to effect the issues listed above.	See above.	N/A