

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC, and AP Members
FROM: Chris Oliver *DO for*
Executive Director
DATE: March 22, 2013
SUBJECT: Miscellaneous Issues

ESTIMATED TIME
6 HOURS
(All D-1a, b, c, d, e
items)

(b) Discussion paper on Bering Sea sablefish TAC specifications.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Review discussion paper and take action as necessary.

BACKGROUND:

In December 2012, the Council initiated a discussion paper to identify issues associated with the Bering Sea sablefish total allowable catch (TAC) and optimal yield (OY). The Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP apportions 50% of the Bering Sea sablefish TAC to the fixed gear sector and 50% to the trawl sector. The Council typically sets the sablefish TACs equal to the acceptable biological catch (ABC) in an effort to maximize the individual fishing quota and community development quota allocations to sablefish quota share holders. The sablefish TACs subsequently are apportioned to the IFQ/CDQ fixed gear fisheries and sablefish trawl fisheries under the authority of the FMP and Federal regulations.

The discussion paper is attached Item D-1(b)(1). In recent years (2010-2012), about half of the fixed gear allocation and <10% of the trawl allocation has been harvested. Given the relatively low catches of sablefish by the trawl sector, the Council may wish to reallocate unused sablefish trawl allocation to the sablefish fixed gear sector to increase the amount of sablefish available for by each IFQ holders; and/or any other BSAI groundfish TAC(s) to increase total groundfish yield under the 2 million mt OY. At this meeting, the Council will review the discussion paper and take action as necessary.