

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Most of the information that you will need and that is available will be found in other parts of your agenda book or made available during the course of the meeting. As we have known for some months, this is going to be a long and difficult meeting with some very complex problems to unravel. It's going to take forbearance and patience from everyone and we may have to break or change the subject at times to allow the teams and workgroups to develop new material or approaches based on your recommendations.

Several recent meetings will influence your actions at this meeting including the industry-to-industry meeting between the Japanese and U.S. fishing industries that took place in Anchorage November 24-26. Copies of their agreement are in the book. The bilateral discussions with the Government of Japan on the interception of North American salmon in the Japanese high seas salmon fisheries had the latest round in Washington on December 4. A meeting on December 6 between a steering group from the State of Alaska, the Japanese Fisheries Association and the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan may also have some bearing on Council deliberations. The latter meeting is the first resulting from a recent cooperative agreement between the State of Alaska, the Japanese Fisheries Association and the Overseas Fisheries Cooperation Foundation of Japan. Reports on the latter two meetings will be available during the course of the Council meeting.

As seems to be the case every year at this time we're still in doubt as to Council funding for the remainder of this fiscal year. We received 25% of our initial '85 funding for the first quarter of this year pending Congressional action on the FY86 budget. We're going to scrape through the quarter on that but will not be able to give Oregon, Washington or Alaska any liaison funds for the first quarter. We would have had real problems making it through the end of January if we had not had some FY85 carry-over money to bridge the gap.

We understand that a decision will be made by February 1 as to the level of FY86 funding. We can only hope that NMFS supports the Council's budget request as they have in the past. The possibility of programmatic funding this year, however, is practically nil.

As of this writing, December 4, the Peoples Republic of China had not cleared up all of the necessary details required for issuance of their permits. I understand their ships are outside the 200-mile zone in the Bering Sea fishing in the "donut hole" and are unsure whether they will try to conduct a joint venture in the Bering Sea during the remainder of this year, assuming their permits are issued, continue fishing outside 200 miles, or go back to China until January. There are, of course, no joint venture fish available in the Gulf of Alaska for the remainder of 1985.

There are a number of distinguished attendees at this Council meeting. Ray Arnaudo, who has been the Council member from the State Department for the past several years, is on a year's assignment to England. His place will be taken either by Larry Snead or Stetson Tinkham, both of whom are here for this meeting. Stetson has been seconded to the State Department from the National Marine Fisheries Service to fill in for Ray while he's on overseas assignment. Larry, of course, is an old hand with the Fisheries and Oceans Division of the State Department.

I would remind you that the Council is holding a no-host reception across the hall from this room Wednesday evening with the bar opening at 6:00 PM. Food is being furnished by the Alaska Factory Trawlers Association.

The arrangement for rewriting the Salmon Fishery Management Plan approved by the Council at the September meeting has been revised. Bob McVey has offered the services of Aven Anderson on his management staff to take the lead in rewriting that FMP so we will not need to work out an arrangement with Mike Fraidenburg as originally planned. It will be a considerable saving to the Council. Aven has been involved with our Salmon FMP since its beginning when he was reviewing that plan, among others, in the Central Office, he is familiar with its history and ramifications.

STATUS OF FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

1. Salmon FMP

No action is required at this meeting. In January the Council will review a schedule for rewriting the FMP taking into account provisions of the U.S-Canada Salmon Treaty.

2. Herring FMP

No action is scheduled for this meeting. The Bering-Chukchi Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan was approved by the Council on September 28, 1983 for Secretary of Commerce review. In May 1984, however, the Council decided to take no further action on the plan until more scientific data become available. The data needed include winter and summer stock distribution and composition as well as offshore biomass estimates. On December 11, 1984, the Council requested the Secretary of Commerce to implement a data collection program. Bill Gordon sent a letter on July 3, 1985 stating that NMFS is not in a position to fund such a program.

3. King Crab FMP

No action is scheduled for this meeting. The FMP became effective December 2, 1984, but final implementing regulations will not be published until late 1985 or early 1986.

4. Tanner Crab FMP

No action is scheduled for this meeting. Only one minor season change by regulatory amendment was needed as a result of decisions by the Board of Fisheries last March.

5. Gulf of Alaska Groundfish FMP

The Council will review groundfish stock status and set OYs for 1985. They will discuss management of 0-TALFF or 0-JVP species and make final recommendations on DAP, JVP and TALFF for 1986.

On July 22 NMFS published an emergency interim rule reducing OYs for pollock, Pacific ocean perch, other rockfish, Atka mackerel, and other species to conform with Amendment 14. The rule also established PSC limits for sablefish and POP in joint venture fisheries and for sablefish, POP, and other rockfish in foreign fisheries. The initial rule was effective until October 15 and was then extended through December 31.

6. Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish FMP

The Council will review groundfish stock status and set TACs for 1986. They will discuss management of 0-TALFF or 0-JVP species and make final recommendations on DAP, JVP and TALFF for 1986.

December 13 is the deadline for proposed changes to the FMP. They will be processed with the coming annual management cycle starting in January.

Amendment 9 was partially approved by NMFS effective December 1. The 20-mile closure in the Aleutians was disapproved and implementation of the habitat section was delayed.