



Halibut Abundance-based Management (ABM) Stakeholder Committee

MINUTES

February 4, 2019

8am-12pm

The Halibut ABM Stakeholder Committee was formed to provide the Council with recommendations for the scenarios to be analyzed in the upcoming halibut abundance-based management PSC limit analysis. The Committee will also provide recommendations on measurable objectives and associated performance metrics to be considered by analysts in evaluating trade-offs among alternatives. The purpose of this meeting was to review the ABM scenarios submitted by stakeholders and provide input and direction to the Council as applicable. The Committee also discussed the process by which input on performance metrics for the analysis would be provided to staff. The agenda and TOR are attached.

Committee Members in attendance:

Andy Mezirow (Chair)
Ruth Christiansen
Angel Drobnica
Bob Alverson

Arne Fuglvog
Heather McCarty
Chad See

Simeon Swetozof
Chris Woodley
Diana Stram (staff)

Agency staff:

Sam Cunningham (NPFMC), Anna Henry (NPFMC), Allan Hicks (IPHC), Diana Evans (NPFMC), Dana Hanselman (NMFS AFSC), Carey McGilliard (phone NMFS AFSC), Jim Ianelli (phone NMFS AFSC), David Witherell (NPFMC), Karla Bush (ADF&G), Jim Armstrong (NPFMC), Elizabeth Figus (NPFMC)

Members of the public (present as well as teleconference):

Jeff Kauffman, John Gauvin, Matteo Paz Soldon, Mark Fina, Raymond Melovidov, Steve Martell, Todd Loomis, Annika Saltman, Matt Robinson, Keith Bruton, Gerry Merrigan, Mike Szymanski, Jim Johnson, Clem Tillion, Linda Behnken, Marylin Zaleski

The Chair, Andy Mezirow, opened the meeting by introducing committee members and reviewed the terms of reference for the committee. He then provided each stakeholder group that submitted a scenario an opportunity to present an overview of their proposal and to answer clarifying questions. He requested that staff provide a summary of the proposals for this report and indicate where each proposal met or deviated from the Council's suite of alternatives from October 2018. **The Chair concluded the meeting noting that scenarios will be provided to the Council and individual stakeholders may provide their input in public comment.**

Diana Stram and Allan Hicks provided a summary of the process to date in developing measurable objectives and performance metrics for the analysis. The table of performance metrics previously developed was provided on the Committee agenda and reviewed by staff. **The Committee members agreed to provide individual input to staff on appropriate performance metrics no later than February 18th.** Diana Stram will post all submissions to the Committee agenda page for transparency. Staff will review and incorporate those metrics as possible for the analysis in October.

There is no further meeting of the committee that is planned at this time absent Council direction otherwise.

The Council motion from October 2018 is attached as an appendix to the report and posted to the Committee's agenda. The staff summary of scenarios is below.

Comparison of ABM stakeholder committee proposals

Five stakeholder proposals were submitted and many of them deviated from the October Council motion (Appendix A). This document summarizes each proposal and compares it to the Council motion, determining where deviations may have occurred.

Each of the proposals submitted for consideration are posted to the Committee agenda page. Each representative was given an opportunity to provide an overview of the scenario and answer any clarifying questions. A proposal from the directed halibut fishery in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands was presented by Heather McCarty, Angel Drobnica, Ray Melovidov, and Jeff Kauffman and is referred to as the directed fishery proposal. They provided a worksheet to calculate PSC limits using their proposal given various inputs. The Fishing Vessel Owners Association (FVOA) provided a proposal which was presented by Bob Alverson. The Amendment 80 fleet provided a proposal that was presented by Chris Woodley and Arne Fuglvog. Ruth Christiansen presented a proposal for United Catcher Boats (UCB). The final proposal was presented by Chad See for the Freezer Longline Coalition. Each proposal is summarized here and compared to the October Council motion.

Tables 1a and 1b highlight where each proposal matched or did not match the motion. This was determined by the ABM working group after reading the proposals, listening to the presentations of the proposals, and having some discussion with the individuals that developed the proposals. The portions of the proposals that did not meet the motion can be classified as 1) an option that is not in the range defined in the motion, 2) an interpretation of the motion that may not have been expected, or 3) a technical improvement. Possible technical improvements are identified, as well as portions of the proposals that are not specific elements but are within the range defined in the motion, but 1) and 2) are not separated and are left to the Council for consideration.

FVOA proposal

The FVOA proposal uses a single index, the setline survey index, to determine the PSC limit, but adds a twist by applying a shallower slope (slower increase) when above the starting and a 1:1 slope when below the starting point. The slope is not modified by a secondary index (the trawl survey index is not used at all). This proposal deviates from the motion in two ways.

Starting Point: Average of 2017 and 2018 usage (2,018 t). Alternatively, average of 2016-2018 usage (2,127 t).

Slope: Slower increase when above starting point (0.5:1), and 1:1 when below.

Council modifications to alternatives necessary for adoption of this proposal:

- Element 1: add two additional lower options for starting points : 2,018 t, 2,127 t
- Add additional options for modification of the slope above and below the starting point.

Directed Fishery

This proposal uses Alternative 3, option 2 from the Council motion which uses the setline survey as the primary index and the trawl index as the secondary index to set the PSC limit for all sectors, and an allocation method for the CDQ PSC limit. This proposal uses the secondary index in a slightly different way than the possibilities that the ABM working group presented. They also standardized the secondary index to

the current year (2017) instead of using an average so that the secondary index did not have an effect on the PSC limit to be set for the following year. The ABM working group found that this proposal deviated from the October Council motion in the following elements.

Apportionment: An alternative method to allocate CDQ PSC limit.

Starting Point: 2017 PSC use (1,958 t)

Element 3 (Floor): 1,000 t

Element 4 (Breakpoint): Standardized the index to 2017

Element 6 (Responsiveness): Supplied a range of 10-20%, which could be taken as option 2 (15%)

Council modifications to alternatives necessary for adoption of this proposal:

- Element 1: add additional option for starting point at lower level 1,958
- Element 3: add additional option for floor at lower level 1,000t
- Consider alternative methods (and options) to allocate CDQ PSC limit
- Add option to standardize secondary index to the current year so that the secondary index does not initially result in large modifications to the PSC limit.

Amendment 80 fleet

The Amendment 80 fleet proposal addresses only the PSC limit for the Amendment 80 fleet and does not consider other trawl fleet PSC limits (i.e., trawl limited access and CDQ). It uses a staircase approach with floors and ceilings to determine the PSC limit based on only the trawl survey index, which can also be viewed as a lookup table. It uses an average of the previous 2 years of the index to stabilize the PSC limit. This proposal deviates from the motion in the following ways.

Apportionment: Only the Amendment 80 fleet PSC limit and does not consider other sectors.

Indices: Trawl survey only, not standardized to any year. The definition of low and high index values based off of the 1998-2017 average is more similar to how the secondary index is treated in alternative 3.

Alternative: This proposal uses alternative 2, option 1 but averages the previous 2 years of the index.

Element 6 (Responsiveness): Average of the recent 2 years.

Council modifications to alternatives necessary for adoption of this proposal:

- Modify Council motion to provide direction that the trawl survey is not indexed to the most recent year and an average of the most recent two years is done on a rolling basis to determine the value to be indexed to PSC in a given year.
- Provide direction to staff as to how the remaining trawl PSC limit outside of Amendment 80 (TLAS and CDQ) is to be calculated. Note that the Amendment 80 and UCB representatives indicated that they may provide a proposal directly to the Council to address this.
- Provide an option to allow for trawl sector specific abundance-based PSC limits (i.e., A80 and TLAS and CDQ separately).
- Provide an additional option to allow for trawl sectors to use a lookup table (i.e., staircase)

United Catcher Boats (UCB)

The proposal from UCB met the specifications of the motion on all accounts, choosing Alternative 2 option 1 to index the trawl PSC limit to the trawl survey index.

Council modifications to alternatives necessary for adoption of this proposal: N/A

Freezer Longline Coalition (FLC)

The Freezer Longline Coalition chose Alternative 4, which is a lookup table to set the PSC limit for the non-trawl sector. They chose an 11x11 lookup table, which was not an option in the Council motion, because it was easier to work with (an odd number of cells allows for the average value, 1.0, to be a row or column in the table). They feel that the largest table allows for a smaller change between cells to avoid large potential changes in the PSC limit, yet retains the simplicity and stability offered by a lookup table. This proposal deviated from the Council motion in two ways.

Alternative: An 11x11 lookup table, but is reasonably justified as being more appropriate than a 10x10 lookup table.

Starting point: The mid-point between the FLC proposed ceiling and floor, which is within the range options in the Council motion.

Council modifications to alternatives necessary for adoption of this proposal:

- Provide one additional dimension for the look-up table options at 11x11
- Add a specific option for the starting point identified in the FLC proposal.

Table 1a: Summary of different sections of the October Council motion and the proposals from FVOA, the directed halibut fishery, and the Amendment 80 fleet. Blue indicates that the proposal did not meet this part of the Council motion, gray indicates that the proposal was within the bounds of options but not a specific option, and gold indicates that it could be a technical improvement or is uncertain whether or not it met the motion.

	Motion	FVOA	Directed users	Amendment 80
Apportionment	Depends on alternative. CDQ PSC cap varies with abundance and is derived from trawl PSC limit.	Current allocation	Current allocation. Proposal for CDQ provides 3 options	A80 only
Indices	1998-2018. Standardize to recent year		Standardize to 2017	Not standardized because using staircase
Alternative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Status Quo 2. Single index to set trawl or non-trawl PSC. Option 1: bottom trawl survey. Option 2: setline survey 3. Primary & secondary indices. Option 1: trawl then setline. Option 2: setline then trawl 4. Look up table. Indices standardized to mean. 	<p>Setline survey only for entire PSC limit.</p> <p>Alt 2, option 2, and sets the entire PSC limit.</p>	<p>Alt 3: Option 2</p> <p>Index to entire PSC limit.</p>	<p>Alt 2: option 1</p> <p>Average the previous 2 years</p>
Slope of primary index	1:1	slower when above starting point (0.5:1). Otherwise 1:1.		
Element 1 Starting point	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2016 PSC limit (3,515 t) 2. 2016 use (2,354 t) 	Average of 2017 and 2018 usage (2,018 t). Alternative average of 2016-2018 (2,127 t)	2017 PSC use 1,958 t	Option 1: 1,745 t for A80 (2016 PSC limit for A80)
Element 2 Maximum PSC limit (Ceiling)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2016 PSC limit (3,515 t) 2. 2015 PSC limit (4,426 t) 	Option 1: 3,515 t	Option 1: 3,515 t	Option 2: 2,325 t for A80 (2015 PSC limit for A80)
Element 3 Minimum PSC limit (Floor)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2016 use (2,354 t) 2. ½ of 2016 PSC limit (1,177 t) 3. ½ of 2016 PSC use (1,177 t) 	0	1,000 t	1,412 t (2016 PSC use by A80)
Element 4 Breakpoint for Alternative 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Index 25% below or above average 2. Index is above or below average 		<p>Option 2: above or below average</p> <p>Standardize the secondary index to 2017</p>	NA
Element 5 Response of secondary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Up faster 2. Up slower 3. Down faster 4. Down slower 		Option 2 and 4. A different interpretation than ABM WG	NA
Element 6: Responsiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% constraint 2. 15% constraint 3. 25% constraint <p>Suboption: limit change from current and implementation</p>	15%	<p>10-20% up, 20% down</p> <p>No initial constraint</p>	Average the recent 2 years of the index

Table 1b: Summary of different sections of the October Council motion and the proposals from United Catcher Boats (UCB) and the Freezer Longline Coalition (FLC). Blue indicates that the proposal did not meet this part of the Council motion, gray indicates that the proposal was within the bounds of options but not a specific option, and gold indicates that it could be a technical improvement or is uncertain whether or not it met the motion.

	Motion	UCB	FLC
Apportionment	Depends on alternative. CDQ PSC cap varies with abundance.		
Indices	1998-2018. Standardize to recent year		1998-2018 average
Alternative	1. status quo 2. Single index to set trawl or non-trawl PSC. Option 1: bottom trawl survey. Option 2: setline survey 3. Primary & secondary indices. Option 1: trawl then setline. Option 2: setline then trawl 4. Look up table. Indices standardized to mean.	Alt 2 Option 1	Alt 4: 11x11 (reasonably justified)
Slope of primary index	1:1		
Element 1 Starting point	1. 2016 PSC limit (3,515 t) 2. 2016 use (2,354 t)	Option 1: 3,515 t	594 t Non-trawl only
Element 2 Ceiling	1. 2016 PSC limit (3515) 2. 2015 PSC limit (4,426)		Option 2: 833 t
Element 3 Floor	1. 2016 use (2354) 2. Half 2016 PSC limit (1758) 3. Half 2016 PSC use (1177)	Option 1: 2,354 t	Option 3: 355 t
Element 4 Breakpoint for alt 3	1. Index 25% below or above average 2. Index is above or below average	NA	NA
Element 5 Response of secondary	1. Up faster 2. Up slower 3. Down faster 4. Down slower	NA	NA
Element 6: Responsiveness	1. 5% constraint 2. 15% constraint 3. 25% constraint Suboption: limit change from current and implementation	Option 2: 15%, with suboption applied	Option 2: 15%

Appendix A:

C-6 Halibut Abundance Based Management of PSC limits

Council Motion – October 6, 2018

The Council recommends the following revisions and clarifications to the alternatives, and direction on a stakeholder committee to the preliminary review draft. The Council also recommends that the analysts incorporate the comments from the SSC to the extent practical.

Apportionment:

The analysis should clearly demonstrate the effects of the alternatives on the resulting allocations to the Amendment 80, BSAI trawl limited access, non-trawl, and CDQ sectors. Allow the CDQ PSC cap to vary with abundance in the same manner as the trawl sector.

Indices:

Base the indices on the timeframe 1998 – 2018 and standardize the primary index to the most recent year.

Alternatives:

Alternative 1: No action

Alternative 2: Single index used to set trawl and/or non-trawl halibut PSC limit.

Option 1: NMFS EBS bottom trawl survey index.

Option 2: IPHC Area 4 setline survey index.

Alternative 3: Primary and secondary indices are used to set trawl and/or non-trawl PSC limit.

Option 1: Primary index is EBS trawl survey, secondary index is Area 4 setline survey.

Option 2: Primary index is Area 4 setline survey, secondary index is EBS trawl survey.

The secondary index modifies the PSC limit after the primary index is applied when the secondary index is in a “high state” or a “low state” (as defined by Element 4 breakpoint options). The extent to which the secondary index influences the PSC limit above or below these breakpoints is determined by selection of options under Element 5.

For each alternative above, the PSC limit will be proportional to the primary index in a 1:1 fashion (e.g., when the index goes up 10%, the PSC limit goes up 10%) prior to modifications by the secondary index and prior to the application of Elements 2 and 3 (floors and ceilings).

Alternative 4: Use two indices (EBS trawl survey and Area 4 setline survey) to set the non-trawl PSC limit in the form of a look-up table. Both indices should be standardized to the mean (1998 – 2018).

Options for dimensions of the look-up table: a) 3x3, b) 5x5, c) 7x 7, d) 10x10

The following elements and options are exclusive to Alternatives 2 – 4.

Element 1 – Starting point for PSC limit

Option 1. 2016 PSC limit (3,515 mt)

Option 2. 2016 use (2,354 mt)

Element 2 – Maximum PSC limit (ceiling)

Option 1. 2016 PSC limit (3,515 mt)

Option 2. 2015 PSC limit (4,426 mt)

Element 3 – Minimum PSC limit (floor)

Option 1. 2016 use (2,354 mt)

Option 2. ½ of 2016 PSC limit (1,758 mt)

Option 3. ½ of 2016 PSC use (1,177 mt)

Element 4 – Breakpoint for secondary index (Alternative 3 only)

Option 1. Index is 25% below or above average

Option 2. Index is above or below average

Element 5 – Magnitude of the response for secondary index (Alternative 3 only)

Up to 2 options may be chosen

Option 1. Up faster than 1:1

Option 2. Up slower than 1:1

Option 3. Down faster than 1:1

Option 4. Down slower than 1:1

Element 6: PSC limit responsiveness to abundance changes.

This option would limit the annual rate of change of PSC limits. This element could be applied to limit the amount of change of the PSC limit on an annual basis.

Option 1: PSC limit varies no more than 5% per year

Option 2: PSC limit varies no more than 15% per year

Option 3: PSC limit varies no more than 25% per year

Suboption: This element could be applied to limit the amount of change between the current PSC limits and the implementation of this action.

Use of IPHC Area 4 setline survey as an index: Describe how setting a PSC limit based on IPHC Area 4 setline survey index meets the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable law.

Stakeholder committee:

The Council intends to form a stakeholder committee that will recommend up to four scenarios from the above Alternatives, Elements, and Options for analysis. This committee will meet to draft these scenarios prior to the February Council meeting. Council staff will attend committee meeting for purposes of feedback and clarification to the Committee. These scenarios, if approved by the Council, may be analyzed in the EIS/RIR.

NPFMC Halibut ABM Stakeholder Committee
Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures
October 2018

1. **Purpose:** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will establish an issue-specific Halibut Abundance-based management (ABM) Stakeholder Committee (committee) to draft alternative scenarios from within the current alternative set for the forthcoming BSAI Halibut ABM EIS/RIR.

2. **Tasks for Committee:**

Task 1: The committee's primary function is to provide a range of up to four different scenarios from within the current alternative set, specifying each individual option from the different elements and options within the suite of three action alternatives¹. Each example scenario provided to the Committee for consideration should also provide a written rationale detailing how this combination of elements and options provided in the scenario is intended to address the Council's Purpose and Need statement and the 5 management objectives below:

The current fixed yield-based halibut PSC caps are inconsistent with management of the directed halibut fisheries and Council management of groundfish fisheries, which are managed based on abundance. When halibut abundance declines, PSC becomes a larger proportion of total halibut removals and thereby further reduces the proportion and amount of halibut available for harvest in directed halibut fisheries. Conversely, if halibut abundance increases, halibut PSC limits could be unnecessarily constraining. The Council is considering linking PSC limits to halibut abundance to provide a responsive management approach at varying levels of halibut abundance. The Council is considering abundance-based PSC limits to control total halibut mortality, particularly at low levels of abundance. Abundance-based PSC limits also could provide an opportunity for the directed-halibut fishery and protect the halibut spawning stock biomass. The Council recognizes that abundance-based halibut PSC limits may increase and decrease with changes in halibut abundance.

- Halibut PSC limits should be indexed to halibut abundance
- Halibut spawning stock biomass should be protected especially at lower levels of abundance
- There should be flexibility provided to avoid unnecessarily constraining the groundfish fishery particularly when halibut abundance is high
- Provide for directed halibut fishing operations in the Bering Sea.
- Provide for some stability in PSC limits on an inter-annual basis.

The committee will provide their recommendations to the Council as early as possible for consideration by the Council within the alternative set. Once approved by the Council, the scenarios will be provided to the analytical workgroup for inclusion as example scenarios for simulation in the EIS/RIR.

Task 2: The committee may meet to discuss and provide recommendations on appropriate performance metrics for evaluating Council objectives for the analysis. Note the priority for the committee is to develop the scenarios first.

¹ Per Council discussion in October 2018 and with appropriate accompanying rationale, elements and options and/or management measures outside of the current alternative set may be considered by the committee as necessary.

2. **Membership:** Committee members will be appointed by the Council chairman from members of the public. The committee is intended to include a range of interested stakeholders from both the directed BSAI groundfish and directed Area 4 halibut fisheries. Interested members of the public should submit a letter of interest and brief resume to the Council chairman and Executive Director.
3. **Organization:**
 - The committee chairman will be appointed by the Council Chairman from sitting members of the Council.
 - Council staff for the committee will be designated by the Council Executive Director. Council staff will be available for feedback and clarification but will not be providing additional analyses to the committee.
 - The Committee may recommend and the Council will set meeting agendas.
 - The Committee will report directly to the Council.
4. **Role and responsibility of stakeholder members:** Stakeholders should develop proposed scenarios and performance metrics prior to the committee meeting(s) and discussed and refined during the committee meeting. Council staff will make available previously-developed background information on alternatives and performance metrics.
5. **Public comment:** Opportunity for public comment for each issue will be provided as time allows. The committee chairman will maintain control of public comment opportunities.

Halibut Abundance-based Management (ABM) Stakeholder Committee

AGENDA

Meeting February 4, 2019

8am-12pm

Crystal Ballroom, The Benson Hotel, Portland, OR

Call-in 907-245-3900

Pin # to join call: 2809

1. Introductions
2. Review Committee Terms of Reference [\[ABM Committee TOR\]](#) and expectations of meeting report to Council from the Committee
3. Presentation of Strawmen scenarios by stakeholder groups and Committee discussions and recommendations on which to move forward to Council for consideration
 1. Directed Fishery
 2. FVOA
 3. Amendment 80
 4. UCB
 5. Freezer Longline Coalition
4. Performance Metrics overview and how to provide input to staff on this after February meeting
5. Adjourn

Staff to work on writing report for finalization by Chairman Mezirow.

For additional information and if you would like to submit public comment, email diana.stram@noaa.gov