

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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December 5, 1997

## DRAFT AGENDA

**130th Plenary Session  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
December 9-14, 1997  
Hilton Hotel  
Anchorage, Alaska**

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will meet December 9-14, 1997 at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska, beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 9. Other meetings to be held during the week are:

### Committee/Panel

Scientific and Statistical Committee

Ecosystems Committee

Advisory Panel

### Beginning

8:00 a.m., Sun., Dec. 7 (King Salmon Room)

8:00 a.m., Sun., Dec. 7 (Katmai Room)

8:00 a.m., Mon., Dec. 8 (Dillingham/Katmai)

All meetings except Council executive sessions are open to the public. Other committee and workgroup meetings may be scheduled on short notice during the week.

## **INFORMATION FOR PERSONS WISHING TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sign-up sheets are available at the registration table for those wishing to provide public comments on a specific agenda item. Sign-up must be completed before public comment begins on that agenda item. Additional names are generally not accepted after public comment has begun.

Submission of Written Comments. Any written comments and materials to be included in Council meeting materials must be received at the Council office **by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 3, 1997.** Written and oral comments should include a statement of the source and date of information provided as well as a brief description of the background and interests of the person(s) submitting the statement. Material received after the deadline will be placed in a special notebook for late materials, but will not be copied or included in meeting notebooks for this meeting. It is the submitter's responsibility to provide adequate copies of comments after the deadline. Materials provided during the meeting for distribution to Council members should be provided to the Council secretary. A minimum of 18 copies is needed to ensure that Council members, the executive director, NOAA General Counsel and the official meeting record each receive a copy. If you also wish copies to be made available for the Advisory Panel (24), Scientific and Statistical Committee (13), staff (10) or the public (50) after the pre-meeting deadline, they must also be provided by the submitter.

## FOR THOSE WISHING TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE ADVISORY PANEL

The Advisory Panel has revised its operating guidelines to incorporate a strict time management approach to its meetings. Rules for testimony before the Advisory Panel have been developed which are similar to those used by the Council. Members of the public wishing to testify before the AP **must** sign up on the list for each topic listed on the agenda. Sign-up sheets are provided in a special notebook located at the back of the room. The deadline for registering to testify is when the agenda topic comes before the AP. The time available for individual and group testimony will be based on the number registered and determined by the AP Chairman. The AP may not take public testimony on items for which they will not be making recommendations to the Council.

## FOR THOSE WISHING TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE

The usual practice is for the SSC to call for public comment immediately following the staff presentation on each agenda item. In addition, the SSC will designate a time, normally at the beginning of the afternoon session on the first day of the SSC meeting, when members of the public will have the opportunity to present testimony on any agenda item. The Committee will discourage testimony that does not directly address the technical issues of concern to the SSC, and presentations lasting more than ten minutes will require prior approval from the Chair.

## COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

<b>ABC</b>	Acceptable Biological Catch	<b>MMPA</b>	Marine Mammal Protection Act
<b>AP</b>	Advisory Panel	<b>MRB</b>	Maximum Retainable Bycatch
<b>ADF&amp;G</b>	Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game	<b>MSY</b>	Maximum Sustainable Yield
<b>BSAI</b>	Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands	<b>mt</b>	Metric tons
<b>CDQ</b>	Community Development Quota	<b>NMFS</b>	National Marine Fisheries Service
<b>CRP</b>	Comprehensive Rationalization Program	<b>NOAA</b>	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Adm.
<b>EA/RIR</b>	Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review	<b>NPFMC</b>	North Pacific Fishery Management Council
<b>EEZ</b>	Exclusive Economic Zone	<b>OY</b>	Optimum Yield
<b>EFH</b>	Essential Fish Habitat	<b>POP</b>	Pacific ocean perch
<b>FMP</b>	Fishery Management Plan	<b>PSC</b>	Prohibited Species Catch
<b>GOA</b>	Gulf of Alaska	<b>SAFE</b>	Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Document
<b>IBQ</b>	Individual Bycatch Quota	<b>SSC</b>	Scientific and Statistical Committee
<b>IPHC</b>	International Pacific Halibut Commission	<b>TAC</b>	Total Allowable Catch
<b>ITAC</b>	Initial Total Allowable Catch	<b>VBA</b>	Vessel Bycatch Accounting
<b>MSFCMA</b>	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act	<b>VIP</b>	Vessel Incentive Program

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**130th Plenary Session**  
**North Pacific Fishery Management Council**  
**December 9-14, 1997**  
**Hilton Hotel**  
**Anchorage, Alaska**

	<u>Estimated Hours</u>
A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER	
(a) Approval of Agenda	•
(b) Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting	•
B. REPORTS	
B-1 Executive Director's Report	•
B-2 State Fisheries Report by ADF&G	•
B-3 NMFS Management Report	•
B-4 Enforcement and Surveillance Report	•
	(2 hours for A/B items)
C. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS	
C-1 <u>Observer Program</u>	(3 hours)
(a) Review draft analysis for a third-party arrangement (joint project agreement) for observer procurement services: Initial review.	
(b) Observer unionization and 1998 fisheries: Discussion.	
C-2 <u>Groundfish/Crab License Limitation Program</u>	(3 hours)
(a) Treatment of vessels foreign owned on June 17, 1995.	
(b) Timing of EGOA trawl closure and reallocation of trawl sablefish set-aside.	
C-3 <u>Halibut and Sablefish IFOs</u>	(1 hour)
(a) RAM Division Report.	
(b) Review proposals and give direction to staff.	
C-4 <u>Research Priorities</u>	(0.5 hours)
Initial review of research priorities.	
C-5 <u>AP/SSC/PNCIAC Appointments</u>	(0.5 hours)
D. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS	
D-1 <u>Final Groundfish Specifications for 1998</u>	(14 hours)
(a) Approve initial BSAI SAFE .	
(b) Approve final 1998 BSAI groundfish and bycatch specifications for public review.	
(c) Approve final 1998 GOA SAFE.	
(d) Approve final 1998 GOA groundfish and bycatch specifications.	
(e) Approve halibut discard mortality rates for 1998.	

- D-2 Scallops (3 hours)  
 Amendment 3: Final Action
- D-3 Groundfish Amendments with Action Required (4 hours)  
 (a) GOA: W/C GOA stand-down/preregistration: Initial review.  
 (b) ~~GOA/BSAI: Streamline TAC setting process: Initial review.\*~~  
 (c) BSAI: Allocation of shortraker/rougheye quota to fixed gear:  
 Initial review.
- D-4 General Groundfish Issues for Discussion (6 hours)  
 (a) Limited processing for catcher vessels: BSAI/GOA  
 (b) Overfishing amendments: BSAI/GOA  
 (c) ~~Catch reporting accuracy/precision: BSAI/GOA\*~~  
 (d) Gear storage/preemption issues: BSAI  
 (e) ~~Salmon retention revisions: BSAI\*~~  
 (f) Pollock 'B' season adjustments: BSAI  
 (g) Report on Groundfish Forum Experimental Fishing Project:  
 Mesh Panel Openings

Total Agenda Hours: 37 hours

\*Withdrawn at the request of NMFS.

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**TIME SUMMARY**

Total agenda hours	37.00 hours
Lunches - 5 days (1 hr ea)	5.00 hours
Breaks (3/day, 15 min ea x 5 days)	<u>3.75 hours</u>
Total estimated hours required:	45.75 hours

Meeting as follows:

Tuesday - 8am-4pm	= 8.0 hours x 1 = 8 hours
Wed.-Thur. - 8am-5:30pm	= 9.5 hours x 2 = 19 hours
Friday-Saturday 8am-4pm	= 8.0 hours x 2 = <u>16 hours</u>

Total available hours:	43 hours
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Certified: Sus Bendixen  
Date: 11-25-97

## MINUTES Scientific and Statistical Committee September 22-24, 1997

The Scientific and Statistical Committee of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council met September 22-24, 1997 at the Double Tree Hotel in Seattle, WA. All members were present with the exception of Marc Miller:

Keith Criddle, Chair  
Harold Weeks  
Doug Eggers  
Terry Quinn

Jack Tagart, Vice-Chair  
Dan Kimura (Alt.)  
Sue Hills  
Al Tyler

Doug Larson  
Steve Klosiewski  
Richard Marasco  
Seth Macinko

### B-2 CRAB FISHERIES REPORTS

The SSC received presentations from Peggy Murphy (ADF&G) and Bob Otto (NMFS) regarding the status of BS/AI crab stocks, the results of recent stock surveys, and anticipated management actions for 1998.

### C-1 INSHORE/OFFSHORE 3

The SSC received a staff presentation of the "sector profiles" document. The SSC also received public testimony from Ed Richardson, Stephen Taufen, Ken Stump, and Rebecca Baldwin. From the SSC's perspective, little has changed since the June meeting, and we refer the Council to our June minutes on this item. Once the Council specifies alternatives for analysis, the SSC suggests that the staff convene a conference call with the SSC to discuss the analytical outline and methodological approach. As the analysis proceeds, the SSC requests that data sources be clearly documented. The components of various industry sectors incorporated in the data being discussed should be made clear. The SSC notes that any set of alternatives may change location and timing of fishing effort relative to marine mammal and seabird feeding areas. Therefore, any analysis of specific alternatives should also include examination of potential impacts to other marine resources.

Deviations from present conditions may affect, positively or negatively, net national economic benefits, they will probably affect the distribution of net revenues between competing sectors of the affected fisheries, and may have spill-over impacts on other fisheries. There are many potential bases for a Council decisions. Due to data limitations and the inability to predict responses to regulatory changes, the SSC does not believe that estimation of net economic benefits will provide a defensible justification for choosing amongst alternative inshore/offshore allocations.

### **C-3(c) SABLEFISH ROLLING CLOSURES**

The SSC reviewed the draft EA/RIR on measures to avoid fishery interference with the sablefish longline stock assessment survey. These measures were designed to eliminate potential bias in estimates of sablefish abundance from the survey, due to interference by commercial fishing vessels fishing in the survey area at the time of the survey. The longline survey is an important component of the stock assessment program for sablefish. Maintaining the scientific integrity of the survey is critical to conservation and management.

The draft EA/RIR is a modest revision of the draft reviewed by the SSC in June. The SSC notes that the survey has been effectively restructured based on discussions with affected user groups in a way that eliminates potential interference from non sablefish-targeted fisheries while maintaining temporal and area coverage consistent with historical surveys. The document details a system of rolling time closures of deepwater fishing areas, which eliminates potential interference with the survey.

The SSC suggests that a table be provided that shows the history of survey timing, and estimated mean and variance of abundance indices. This information would facilitate evaluation of the costs and benefits of the proposed measures. The SSC also notes that the claim of "no additional enforcement" costs is likely incorrect and should be modified. The SSC recommends that the EA/RIR be sent out for public review.

### **C-4(a) HALIBUT CHARTERBOAT MANAGEMENT**

The SSC received a staff update on this issue. Public testimony was received from Mike Bethers, Barry Bracken, Gale Vick, and Tim Evers. Doug Vincent-Lang (ADF&G), Ed Dersham (Alaska Board of Fisheries), and Bob Trumble (IPHC) also provided comments to the SSC.

The condensed draft EA/RIR generally addresses the concerns and requests expressed by the SSC after review of the earlier EA/RIR. However, the SSC believes that the quantitative analyses still warrant further qualification. While there are many potential bases for Council decisions, the SSC wishes to reemphasize our assessment that the quantitative analyses have sufficient uncertainty with respect to both magnitude and direction of changes in net benefits that they should not be used to provide justification for a Council decision.

### **C-4(b) LOCAL AREA MANAGEMENT PLANS**

The SSC received a staff presentation on local area management plans for halibut.

### **C-4(d) HALIBUT POSSESSION LIMITS**

The SSC received to a staff report on the proposed draft EA/RIR for changing the sport fish bag and possession limits for halibut. Public testimony was offered by Mike Bethers, Barry Bracken, and Seth Bowen. Doug Vincent-Lang (ADF&G) also provided comments.

Two problems were identified, the first dealing with the definition of "in possession" addresses an apparent loophole between federal and state regulations. The second problem was not very well articulated but appeared to address the allocation of halibut between recreational and commercial harvesters. Specifically, it is suggested that existing daily bag and possession limits constrain recreational harvesters access to halibut. The SSC finds that the problem associated with the definition of "in possession" is well stated and the alternative proposed addresses the problem. However, we do not find a clear problem associated with the bag and possession limits,

nor do we recognize a set of alternatives that address the supposed problem. With respect to both problems, we find the EA/RIR deficient in its evaluation of the potential social and economic impacts under the proposed alternatives.

Shortcomings of the draft document include: 1) failure to model changes in catch-per-angler-day; 2) failure to model the effect of regulatory changes on the demand for halibut sport fishing trips; 3) the assumption that angling does not contribute to the consumer surplus of Alaskan residents belies common sense and economic theory; 4) the document relies on questionable quantitative analyses drawn from the Halibut Charterboat EA/RIR which were criticized for inadequacy in previous SSC minutes.

**We recommend that this analysis not be distributed for public review at this time.**

### **C-5(d) MAGNUSON STEVEN ACT PROVISIONS**

It was brought to the SSC's attention that NMFS plans to release final guidelines for implementation of the MSFCMA in October. Examination of the draft guidelines sent out for public review indicated that there are features, such as the proposed overfishing definitions, that require careful analysis to determine if the Council's FMPs comply. The SSC looks forward to participating in this analysis.

Dave Witherell presented an initial draft of the essential fish habitat reports for the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska groundfish resources. Tom Okey of Center for Marine Conservation provided public testimony. The drafts present EFH descriptions based on our knowledge of distribution from resource surveys and fishery activities. Available information is categorized by life history stage based on quality and quantity.

The SSC commends the technical team for their approach to capturing and presenting the available information in a readily understandable format. We appreciate the technical teams' creativity and responsiveness to the intent of the Sustainable Fisheries Act. Designating level 0 distribution information captures opportunistic observations and complementary criteria for EFH emphasize habitats and ecological processes to supplement distribution information. It is important for the Council and the public to realize that our understanding of habitat and ecological processes influencing and limiting groundfish production is general rather than detailed and specific. This area of science is not well formed, and basic questions have no clear answers at present. Sustainable fisheries are just as dependent on productive high quality habitat as they are on healthy spawning stocks. The documents represent a significant first step in characterizing our understanding. As such, we expect that they will serve as guides for further efforts in habitat related data collection and presentation.

Solicitation and incorporation of local and traditional knowledge into EFH identification and description will be an important but difficult task. The schedule mandated by Congress for identification and description of EFH is very tight. Therefore, we suggest that development of appropriate contacts and mechanisms for collection of local and traditional knowledge be developed on a parallel track. Clearly the EFH documents will evolve over time and knowledge from other sources will be welcomed during the process. The Council's Ecosystem Committee has discussed this issue in a related context. We encourage the technical teams to share thoughts and work with the Ecosystem Committee toward this common goal.

### **C-7 OBSERVER PROGRAM**

The SSC received a presentation from Dr. Bill Karp (NMFS) and Al Didier (PSMFC) describing the options being considered for the third party procurement system. This system will be managed jointly by the NMFS and PSMFC under a joint project agreement (JPA). Options being considered address (1) the role PSMFC plays and

(2) the method of assigning coverage among observer contractors. The SSC suggests that in selecting among the various options constructed to address these issues, the impacts on data quality need to be carefully examined and heavily weighted. The SSC believes the retention of high quality observers is essential to maintaining a reliable program. The SSC recommends that observer program staff work with PSMFC to identify criteria for rating observer performance.

### D-3 INITIAL GROUND FISH SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1998

Most initial 1998 groundfish specifications represent roll-overs of 1997 final specifications. We expect changes in many assessments as data from 1997 surveys are incorporated into the final SAFE document in December. Therefore, we offer specific comments on a limited number of species or assessments; otherwise we concur with the Plan Teams' preliminary recommendations without further comment. We look forward to the chapter authors' responses to the general SAFE issues we listed in the December 1996 SSC minutes:

- (1) Biomass and yield projections for an  $F_{40\%}$  harvest strategy under varying assumptions regarding recruitment and for other relevant exploitation rates.
- (2) Standard errors or confidence intervals for key parameters.
- (3) Sensitivity analyses for key parameters and input assumptions.
- (4) Weightings given to individual data components should be reported and justified.
- (5) Risk analyses.

We recognize that many assessments already incorporate these elements, and that some (e.g., standard errors and confidence limits) may not be possible for some assessments. However, to the extent practicable, such efforts should be continued and expanded.

#### D-3 (a, b) Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands

##### Walleye Pollock

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team's proposed ABC for EBS and AI pollock; we have amended the proposed ABC for the Bogoslof area. The 1997 Bogoslof survey estimate of biomass continues the downward trend that has persisted since 1991. The Plan Team has recommended an ABC of 58,800 mt based on  $F_{40\%}$  applied to the projected 1998 biomass. The SSC recommends that the Bogoslof ABC be adjusted downward following the principles we applied in December 1996. Specifically, the ABC should be reduced by the ratio of current biomass to target biomass, where target biomass is taken to be the biomass required to open a directed fishery. Based on that adjustment, the SSC recommends an ABC of 8,445 mt ( $F_{40\%} = 0.27$ ,  $M = 0.20$ ,  $\mu = 0.21542$ ,  $B_{98} = 280,000$  mt,  $B_{\text{target}} = 2,000,000$  mt,  $ABC = (\mu)(B_{98})(B_{98} / B_{\text{target}})$ ). The OFL associated with the SSC's ABC recommendation is  $(8,445 * (78,968/60,319)) = 11,056$ . (SSC ABC \* (Plan Team OFL / Plan Team ABC)).

We understand that the final 1997 chapter will also include several models. It will facilitate comparison and evaluation of the models if they are based on comparable data. In addition, the SSC has requested evaluation of methods of forecasting recruitment, especially the utility of ancillary environmental variables such as sea surface drift. Recruitment is especially important because the EBS stock is supported by a limited number of year classes. Therefore, the SSC is particularly interested in a more detailed analysis of recruitment.



Much of the public testimony at the December 1996 meeting focused on how the issue of uncertainty is addressed in the SAFEs in general and in the BS/AI pollock chapter in particular. The SSC drafted the five general SAFE issues (listed at the beginning of section D-3) to address those concerns, among others. Therefore, the SSC feels it is especially important that the final BS/AI pollock assessment address those issues.

In 1996, we were presented with results from an age-structured assessment of AI pollock. However, the SAFE lacked detailed description of the model, model inputs, sensitivity analysis, or detailed outputs. If the model is used to recommend ABC in 1998, the SSC requests an expanded report with details of the model, inputs and outputs.

#### Greenland Turbot

The SSC's preliminary 1998 ABC recommendation is 12,350 mt ( $F_{40\%} = 0.253$ ), the amount proposed at the Council's December 1996 meeting. The recommendation was based on a stock synthesis analysis of the status of this resource and the assumption that the catch is split equally between trawl and longline gear types. The Team used a 20/80 percentage split between trawl and longlines and a corresponding  $F_{40\%} = 0.35$ . The SSC decided to be more conservative because it is difficult to predict the percentage of total catch that will be harvested by the different gear types.

#### Sablefish (BS/AI and GOA)

Dr. Mike Sigler (NMFS-Auke Bay) presented the preliminary assessment, which incorporates additional age data from the 1996 long-line survey, annual estimates of catch under-reporting during 1986-1990, and estimates of variability in survey age and abundance indices. These modeling changes do not create substantial differences in the values used to calculate ABC. A revised assessment incorporating 1997 longline survey data is expected in December. We concur with the Plan Teams in encouraging assessment authors to present fishery catch and bycatch information which may provide insights on incoming year class strength. We also request a table of fishery and survey age-distribution data. While the preliminary 1998 ABC is the same as that for 1997, we note that the sablefish resource continues to decline due to low recruitment and we anticipate the final 1998 ABC to be lower than the 1997 ABC.

#### **D-3 (d, e)      Gulf of Alaska**

#### Walleye Pollock

The SSC concurs with the Plan Teams recommended ABC and supports the Plan Teams request to evaluate age specific rates of natural mortality in the main model used to estimate ABC. The SSC applauds the clarity of the model presentation and the analysts' efforts to explicitly include estimates of predation mortality. We encourage continued work in this area.

#### Pacific Cod

The Pacific cod fishery in State waters has developed to represent a significant portion of the total catch, and is particularly focused in some GOA regions. The SSC recommends that the State data be incorporated in the assessment. In particular, the length frequency and catch data must be used as stratified by Eastern, Central and Western regions for the jig and pot fisheries.

## Flatfish

The SSC recommends that the 1997 ABCs be used as the preliminary 1998 ABCs for species in this complex. Apportionment among the three management areas should continue to be based on the trawl survey biomass distribution.

## Arrowtooth

The SSC was informed that the 1996 catch and corresponding length composition were used to update the length-based synthesis model employed last year. This analysis produced an exploitable biomass estimate of 2,062,740 for 1998. The  $F_{40\%}$  fishery mortality rate, 0.189, was applied to the exploitable biomass estimate to determine ABC, 208,340 mt.

It is recommended that the ABC be apportioned among the three regulatory areas in proportion to biomass distribution as determined in the 1996 NMFS trawl survey. The resulting ABCs for the Western, Central and Eastern management areas are 33,010 mt, 149,640 mt, and 25,690 mt, respectively. The overfishing level, 295,970 mt, was determined by applying  $F_{30\%} = 0.276$  to the exploitable biomass.

The SSC also took public testimony from Ken Stump. He suggested that differential harvesting of groundfish species in the GOA could be altering groundfish composition and ecosystem processes to the detriment of marine mammals. The SSC supports continued research on predator/prey interactions and ecosystem processes that will contribute to understanding of this issue.

Sablefish - see BS/AI section.

## Pacific Ocean Perch

The ABC(15,840 mt) and OFL (22,590 mt) for POP were based on Tier III-b criteria and apportioned according to the distribution of survey biomass. ABC and OFL were set at 2,230 mt and 3,109 mt for the Western Gulf, 8,160 mt and 11,630 mt for the Central Gulf, and 5,450 mt and 7,770 mt for the Eastern Gulf. The ABC and OFL were based on a revised biomass estimate that incorporated updated catch data. Chris Blackburn (AGDB) offered public testimony suggesting that constant catch harvest policies be evaluated. Specifically, constant catch policies could smooth the year to year variability in harvest during intervals between strong recruitment events and provide increased predictability and stability to harvesters and processors. The SSC encourages the exploration of alternative harvest strategies from both biological and economic perspectives.

## **D-3(other) Ecosystems (BS/AI & GOA)**

The current ecosystem concerns segment is an abbreviated listing of issues raised in previous years with no new information. We look forward to the expanded ecosystem chapter of the final SAFE. With the increased interest and emphasis on ecosystem-related fisheries management issues, we expect the ecosystem chapter to become increasingly valuable as a synthesis and update for the Council and the public. This chapter should continue to be a forum for important issues that fall outside the present scope of the Stock assessments.

The SSC received a report from Dr. Richard Merrick (NMFS) regarding the status of Steller sea lion stocks. The 1997 assessment suggests a continuation of the stock decline. In addition to identifying a decline, the researchers found evidence suggesting that El Nino related oceanographic effects have adversely affected sea lion stocks. Because these effects are likely to be more pronounced in 1998, it is anticipated that the Steller stock will face increased stress in 1998.

### **D-3(other) Economic SAFE**

The SSC received a presentation from Dr. Joe Terry (AFSC) regarding efforts to develop ongoing fishery performance and cost data. Data collection is expected to begin in early 1998, with initial results anticipated for inclusion in the 1998 Economics SAFE. Initial efforts are expected to focus on the BS/AI pollock and H&G factory trawl fisheries. The SSC is encouraged by the progress being made to address this perennial research priority.

### **JOINT MEETING WITH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL SSC MEMBERS**

The SSC held an informational meeting with several members of the PFMC SSC, including Gary Stauffer (NMFS-AFSC), Kit Rassin (Tualip Tribes), Cindy Thompson (NMFS-SWC), and Pat Sullivan (IPHC). The discussions were informal and ranged over several areas of mutual concern and interest including stock assessment procedures, characterization and representation of uncertainty, overfishing definitions, and constraints to economic analyses.

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES SEPTEMBER 22-26, 1997 SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Advisory Panel members in attendance:

Alstrom, Ragnar	Jones, Spike
Bruce, John (Chair)	Lewis, John
Benson, Dave	Madsen, Stephanie (Vice-Chair)
Burch, Alvin	Nelson, Hazel
Cotton, Bruce	Paddock, Dean
Cross, Craig	Roos, John
Falvey, Dan	Stephan, Jeff
Fanning, Kris	Turk, Teresa
Fraser, Dave	Ward, Robert
Fuglvog, Arne	Wurm, Rob
Ganey, Steve	Yeck, Lyle
Gundersen, Justine	Yutzenka, Grant

The Advisory Panel unanimously approved their June 1997 meeting minutes.

### C-1 Inshore/Offshore

The AP recommends the Council adopt the problem statement from June 1997 minutes (page 1). Motion carries 18/2/2.

The AP recommends the Council adopt the following problem statement for the Gulf of Alaska:

Allowing the current Gulf of Alaska Inshore/Offshore allocative regime to expire December 31, 1998, would allow the same preemption of resident fleets by factory trawlers in the pollock and Pacific cod fisheries which occurred in 1989. It was this dramatic preemption which triggered the original proposal for an inshore/offshore allocation. In 1989, there was still pollock available in the Bering Sea when the preemption occurred when vessels moved into the Gulf to take advantage of fish with high roe content.

A rollover of the current Gulf of Alaska inshore/offshore program which allocates 100% of the pollock and 90% of the Pacific cod to shore-based operations is a proactive action to prevent the reoccurrence of the original problem.

Motion carries unanimously.

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

The AP recommends the Council analyze the following alternatives:

Alternative 1: No Action. Allocations would expire at the end of 1998

Alternative 2: Rollover existing Inshore/Offshore Program including:

\*GOA Pollock and Pacific cod allocations

\*65/35 BSAI Pollock Allocation

Suboption a: 1 yr

Suboption b: 3 yrs

Option: Reserve set aside for catcher vessels less than 125 feet

Range of between 40-65% of the inshore quota

Alternative 3: Allocation range to catcher vessels delivering to:

Inshore sector	25	30	40	45
True Motherships	05	10	10	15
Factory Trawlers & Factory Trawlers	70	60	50	40

Option: Reserve set aside for catcher vessels less than 125 feet

A range of between 40-65% of the inshore and mothership sector quotas

Allocation would be analyzed such that the True motherships would be looked at as a sub-component of either the inshore or offshore component or as a separate component.

Use definitions provided by staff for inshore, offshore, and true motherships.

Also included:

1. Catcher Vessel Operational Area (CVOA) be included both as applying during A & B season with an examination of motherships in CVOA exclusively as well as excluded from CVOA.
2. No CVOA
3. a. No Sunset date, but is intended to serve as an interim measure until the CRP has been completed.  
b. 3 year sunset.

Additionally, the Council would undertake an extensive study of the problems in the BSAI pollock fishery, including but not limited to those addressed by the existing inshore/offshore program and including Alternative 3 options. Motion passes 14/6.

The AP recommends the I/O analysis identify and examine potential conservation impacts on fish stocks, marine mammals and other marine resources that may result from status quo, or any changes in the structure of the fishery as well as other recommendations made by the SSC in their June 1997 minutes. Motion carries 18/0/1.

The AP recommends the current CDQ allocation be separated from the inshore offshore 3 amendment and proceed on its own course to be combined with the Multi-species CDQ program as a permanent allocation. Motion carries 18/1/2.

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## MINORITY REPORT C-1 Inshore/Offshore

We the undersigned Advisory Panel members believe that the options should be limited to Alternative 1 and 2. The range of allocations in Alternative 3 require a full cost and benefit analysis, and scope of study and analyses which cannot be accomplished adequately by June of 1998. The Council should treat inshore/offshore as an interim measure and devote the time and staff for accomplishing CRP.

Signed: Craig Cross  
Dave Fraser  
Kris Fanning  
Hazel Nelson  
John Bruce  
Dave Benson  
Rob Wurm

### C-3 Halibut and Sablefish IFQs

#### *(a) Ownership Requirements for Hiring a Skipper*

The AP moved to table this agenda item until the December 1997 meeting with directions to staff to reanalyze the Odegard proposal (Alternative 2) with the correct interpretation of the proposal's intent. Motion carries 13/7.

#### *(b) Weighmaster Program*

The AP does not believe, at this time, an industry funded weighmaster program is necessary. The AP further recommends supporting efforts to replace lost personnel at NMFS enforcement. The AP notes this motion is not to be interpreted to deter NMFS from pursuing a federally funded program. Motion carries 18/4.

#### *(c) Sablefish Rolling Closure*

The AP recommends the Council send out the rolling closure EA/RIR for public review and schedule final action in September 1998. Additionally, at the September 1998 meeting the AP would like to receive a report from NMFS on the success of an additional year of voluntary compliance with the reordered sablefish longline survey in 1998. Motion carries unanimously.

#### *Indirect Ownership*

The AP requests the Council direct staff to develop an EA/RIR on direct and indirect ownership consideration for initial review in December 1997. The AP further recommends the Council request NMFS to continue to use the same interpretation on this issue until final action. Motion carries unanimously.

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## C-4 Halibut Charter and Other Halibut Issues

### *(a) Halibut Charterboat Management*

The AP recommends the Council adopt Alternative 2 (to implement recordkeeping and reporting requirements) including the following:

1. catch figures (retained and released)
2. location of catch
3. number of clients
4. resident or non-resident
5. ownership of vessel and identity of operator

The AP endorses ADF&G's willingness to gather and monitor data collected and further recommends the Council:

1. Utilize the Council/Board of Fisheries partnership to facilitate the development of local area management plans for the marine fisheries that occur in the vicinity of the coastal communities of Alaska including other recreation fisheries.
2. Refer other sport halibut issues and the issues relating to the halibut fisheries that occur in the immediate vicinity of the coastal communities, including a moratorium on new entrants in the fishery, to the joint Council/Board of Fisheries committee as outlined in the draft ADF&G/BOF committee report.

The AP recognizes the Council and Secretarial approval is required for all measures. The AP requests Council review the protocols used by the Board of Fisheries to develop local planning and receive an annual update on issues.

Motion carries 18/0/1.

The AP recommends the Council establish a guideline harvest level (GHL) for the charter sport industry including charterboats, lodges and outfitters, in IPHC areas 2C and 3A. The guideline harvest level shall be:

1. Set at 125% of the 1995 guided harvest level by IPHC area for 2C and 3A (as indicated in Table 1.2 of the Halibut Charterboat EA/RIR - Attachment 1);
2. Be expressed as a percent of the area TAC;
3. Managed to maintain a stable charter season of historic length, using state-wide and zone specific measures. These measures will be developed in cooperation with the BOF and the regional charter industry representatives and submitted to the Council for review and approval. When end-of-season catch data indicates that the guided sport industry may reach or exceed the GHL in the following season, NMFS shall implement the preapproved measures to slow down guided sport harvest (i.e., ensure that the GHL is not exceeded).

Motion carries 11/6/1

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## MINORITY REPORT C-4(a) Halibut Charterboat Management

We, the undersigned Advisory Panel members believe that the motion to establish a Guideline Harvest Level on the charterboat guided recreational harvest is unnecessary for the following reasons:

1. 125% of the 1995 harvest level is based on incomplete estimations and does not reflect the growth of demand that has occurred or increase in TAC that has also occurred.
2. There is no biological reason to warrant establishing a GHL for public access.
3. Unnecessarily restricts the charter businesses the ability to provide reasonable assurances of public access for the upcoming season.
4. The meaningful harvest level can only be provided based on data to be collected by a Council approved process. The present data is incomplete and suspect.
5. The consumer that will be impacted by any adjustments in management of their access have not been provided opportunity to affect this motion.
6. If the GHL is necessary, we feel it should apply to both guided and non-guided recreational fishers. This has the potential of affecting over 400,000 people in the country including subsistence fishers.
7. This action places increased and disproportionate burdens on the charter industry without cause. This seems especially inappropriate given the Council recently expended tremendous expense and effort to remove burdens from the longline industry.
8. By voting in favor of the charterboat cap you are limiting the ability of the industry to develop in Alaska. There is no economic or biological data to warrant a restriction on charterboats that also affects the entire tourist industry in Alaska. Do not buy into this concept thinking it would optimize maximal benefit of the halibut resource.

Signed: John Lewis  
Robert Ward  
Teresa Turk

### *(c) Sitka Sound Management Plan*

A motion recommending Council adopt Alternative 2 including suboption for Sitka residents only was on the table when a motion to delete the suboption failed 5/7/1, but reconsideration to delete suboption passed 8/5 and motion to delete suboption passed 8/5.

A motion to table to allow the Sitka Task Force to further refine suboption an delay action until action is taken on Halibut Subsistence passed 14/1/1.



# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## C-5 Magnuson-Stevens Act Revisions

### *(b) North Pacific Loan Program*

The AP recommends the Council adopt the North Pacific Loan Program with the following conditions:

1. The fees for the loan program be based only on the IFQ fishery.
2. The division between "small boat" and "entry level" be 50/50. This level should be considered a target and adjusted as demand indicates to fully disperse the funds available.
3. Poundage limits be considered as an aggregate of total sablefish and halibut holdings.
4. The AP concurs with the amendment as drafted creating no functional difference between entry level and small boat. To limit second generation entrants to loans for 8,000 pounds while allowing current participants loans for 50,000 pounds is inconsistent with the intent of the program. To drop the 150-day requirement is inconsistent with Council intent for experienced, professional second generation buyers of QS.

Motion carries unanimously.

### *(c) Proposals for Bycatch Reduction Measures*

To satisfy the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the AP recommends the Council direct staff to begin analysis of three FMP amendments to meet the bycatch reduction statutory deadline of October 11, 1998.

1. Proposal #12 amended to include a review of chinook bycatch management regime:
  - (a) sampling methodology/estimation procedures
  - (b) fishery specific area closures and triggers
  - (c) discreet hot spot closure
2. Individual analysis of proposal #2.
3. An amendment proposal combining proposals #5 and #13.
4. Proposal #3

The AP recognizes that proposals #5 and #13 as stand-alone proposals are insufficient because they only address mortality rather than avoidance. The AP recommends including proposal #3 or some other avoidance measure to the FMP analysis of proposals #5 and #13.

Motion carries 15/6.

## C-9 Vessel Bycatch Accountability (VBA)

The AP recommends the Council have the committee continue its efforts. Further, the AP requests the Council:

1. have NOAA GC address the legal issues including enforceability, and
2. have the committee examine the effects of the VBA program on the current observer program.

Motion carries unanimously.

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## D-2 BSAI Groundfish Issues

### *(a) Shortraker/Rougheye Rockfish*

The AP reiterates its recommendation (June 1997 minutes) that the Council direct NMFS to set aside 30% of the TAC for Aleutian Islands shortraker/rougheye at the beginning of each fishing season for the longline fisheries for bycatch only. On, or about, November 1 of each year any excess shortraker/rougheye in the longline quota may be rolled over to the trawl fisheries. The AP again requests the Council take the necessary action (i.e., emergency rule or fast-track) to get this in place by 1998.

The AP further recommends the Alternative 2 option of 7% maximum retainable bycatch (MRB) relative to the deepwater complex and 2% MRB relative to the shallow water complex.

Additionally, the AP recommends separating out shortraker/rougheye from the rockfish complex for purposes of the MRB.

Motion carries 16/0.

## D-3(a-c) BSAI Specifications and SAFE

### *(a) BSAI SAFE*

The AP recommends the Council release the 1998 BSAI SAFE document for public review. Motion carries unanimously.

### *(b) 1998 Groundfish and Bycatch Specifications*

The AP recommends the Council adopt the preliminary BSAI groundfish specifications for 1998 as listed in the plan team minutes (1998 ABCs and 1997 TACs), except Bogoslof pollock ABC which would be 8,400 mt. The AP recommends the following be rolled over:

- Pollock A and B seasons rollover the same percentage (45/65%) as in 1997
- Pelagic/non-pelagic pollock (no allocation)
- Seasonal apportionment for fixed gear Pacific cod would be the same as 1997
- Bycatch allowances be moved as annual amounts except for rockfish which would be 0 in the first quarter with the remainder apportioned throughout the rest of the year, including the apportioned red king crab inside the 10" strip.

Motion carries unanimously.

### *(c) VIP Rates*

The AP recommends the Council rollover the VIP rates from 1997. Motion carries unanimously.

# DRAFT AP MINUTES

## **D-3(d-e) GOA Specifications and SAFE**

### *(d) GOA SAFE*

The AP recommends the Council release for public review the 1998 GOA preliminary SAFE documents. Motion carries unanimously.

### *(e) GOA Specifications and Halibut Discard Mortality Rates*

The AP recommends the Council adopt the preliminary GOA groundfish specifications as listed in the document (1998 ABCs and 1997 TACs) with the exemption of pollock where the 1998 ABC be used as the 1998 TAC. The AP further recommends the Council adopt PSC limits for halibut the same as 1997 without the seasonal apportionments for both trawl and hook and line. Motion carries unanimously.

## **D-4 Scallop Plan**

The AP recommends the Council release Amendment 3 for public review with Alternative 2 noted as the preferred alternative. The AP requests Council have staff highlight the Council's inability to modify the State permit or modify the Federal permit at time of final action on this issue. Motion carries 16/0/1.