

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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January 23, 2003

DRAFT AGENDA
160th Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
January 27- February 4, 2003
Renaissance Madison Hotel
515 Madison Street

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will meet January 29 through February 4, 2003 at the Renaissance Madison Hotel in Seattle, WA. Other meetings to be held during the week are:

<u>Committee/Panel</u>	<u>Beginning</u>
EFH Committee	9:00 am Sun., January 26 (South Room)
Advisory Panel	8:00 am, Mon., January 27 (North/West Room)
Scientific and Statistical Committee	8:00 am, Mon., January 27 (East Room)

The Council, SSC and AP will meet at the Renaissance Madison Hotel. All meetings are open to the public, except executive sessions of the Council. Other committee and workgroup meetings may be scheduled on short notice during the week, and will be posted at the hotel.

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. Written comments and materials to be included in Council meeting **notebooks** must be received at the Council office **by 5:00 pm (Alaska Time) on Monday January 20th.** 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. Comments can be sent by mail or fax--please **do not** submit comments by e-mail. **It is the submitter's responsibility to provide an adequate number of 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 **25** copies is needed to ensure that Council members, the executive director, NOAA General Counsel, appropriate staff, and the official meeting record each receive a copy. If copies are to be made available for the Advisory Panel (**28**), Scientific and Statistical Committee (**18**), or the public 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

ABC	Acceptable Biological Catch	MSFCMA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
AP	Advisory Panel	MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act
ADFG	Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game	MRB	Maximum Retainable Bycatch
BSAI	Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands	MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield
CDQ	Community Development Quota	mt	Metric tons
CRP	Comprehensive Rationalization Program	NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
CVOA	Catcher Vessel Operational Area	NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Adm.
EA/RIR	Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review	NPFMC	North Pacific Fishery Management Council
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	OY	Optimum Yield
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat	POP	Pacific ocean perch
FMP	Fishery Management Plan	PSC	Prohibited Species Catch
GHL	Guideline Harvest Level	SAFE	Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Document
GOA	Gulf of Alaska	SSC	Scientific and Statistical Committee
HAPC	Habitat Areas of Particular Concern	TAC	Total Allowable Catch
IBQ	Individual Bycatch Quota	VBA	Vessel Bycatch Accounting
IFQ	Individual Fishing Quota	VIP	Vessel Incentive Program
IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission		
IRFA	Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis		
IRIU	Improved Retention/Improved Utilization		
ITAC	Initial Total Allowable Catch		
LAMP	Local Area Management Plan		
LLP	License Limitation Program		

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Seattle, WA

Estimated Hours

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- (a) Approval of Agenda

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B. REPORTS

- B-1 Executive Director's Report
B-2 NMFS Management Report (and IFQ Cost Recovery report)
B-3 ADF&G Management Report
B-4 Coast Guard Report
B-5 NMFS Enforcement Report
B-6 USFWS Report
B-7 IPHC report

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(4 hrs for
A/B items)

C. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

- C-1 Gulf of Alaska Rationalization
(a) Review discussion paper on elements and options for analysis.
(b) Receive NOAA GC legal opinion on regionalization alternatives.
(c) Receive report on state/federal parallel fisheries.
(d) Identify alternatives, elements, and options for analysis.
- C-2 Crab Rationalization and other management issues
(a) Receive Committee reports and determine preferred alternatives for completed trailing amendments.
(b) Discuss EIS status and alternatives.
- C-3 Steller Sea Lion Issues
(a) Status Report and potential next steps.
- C-4 Essential Fish Habitat
(a) Receive progress report on EIS development.
(b) Review staff clarification of mitigation alternatives.
(c) Receive EFH Committee recommendations.
- C-5 American Fisheries Act Issues
(a) Review final co-op reports and agreements.
(b) Final action on BSAI Pacific cod sideboard amendment.

(12 hrs)

(12 hrs)

(2 hrs)

(6 hrs)

(2 hrs)

- C-6 IR/IU (4 hrs)
 - (a) Initial review of Trailing Amendments C (minimum retention standards) and D (5% exemption).
- C-7 Observer Program (2 hrs)
 - (a) Review discussion paper on alternatives for restructuring observer program.
 - (b) Receive report from Observer Committee and provide direction.
- C-8 Halibut Charter GHL/IFQ (1 hrs)
 - Receive report from SSC on data reconciliation.

D. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

- D-1 Groundfish Issues (4 hrs)
 - (a) Review research priorities.
 - (b) Review NMFS discussion paper on BSAI rockfish management and report from the rockfish working group (RWG).
 - (c) Review NOAA GC report on alternatives for TAC-setting process amendment package.
 - (d) Review DSR retention amendment and take final action.
- D-2 Staff Tasking (2 hrs)
 - Review tasking and committees and provide direction to staff.
- D-3 Other Business (1 hr)

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

F. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Total Agenda Hours: 52 hours

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Certified: Shirley Bendix
Date: 1/16/03

DRAFT MINUTES Scientific Statistical Committee December 2, December 4, 2002

The Scientific Statistical Committee met December 2-December 4, 2002 in Anchorage, AK. The following members were present:

Rich Marasco, Chair,
Keith Criddle,
George Hunt,

Jack Tagart, Vice Chair,
Gordon Kruse,
Dan Kimura,

Steve Berkeley,
Mark Herrmann,
Ken Pitcher

Doug Eggers, Steve Hare, Sue Hills, and Seth Macinko were unable to participate in committee discussions, Terry Quinn participated via conference call. The committee wishes to express appreciation to Doug Eggers and Steve Berkeley for their many thoughtful contributions across many years of service, since this is their last meeting.

C-1 (a) CRAB MANAGEMENT: Committee Reports and Trailing Amendments

Council staff, Mark Fina and Nicole Kimball presented five trailing amendments on captain quota share, sideboard protection, data collection, mandatory binding arbitration and additional amendments. There was no public testimony.

Trailing Amendment on Captain Quota Share (C shares)

The SSC notes that the final analysis of options to be delivered to the Council has changed very little since the presentation of the Captain share committee report at the October 2002 meeting and has no addition to its prior minutes.

Trailing Amendment on Sideboard Protection

In the presentation on sideboards designed to limit efforts of BSAI crab fishermen in the Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod fisheries, the most important identified fisheries were the west and central GOA Pacific cod fisheries. Changes from the prior briefing on sideboards included adding information on the catch history of the AFA vessels that are exempt from GOA sideboards. Additional analysis was also presented on whether to place sideboards restrictions on the vessel where the crab quota was generated or the licenses held by the vessel that generated the crab quota. The SSC received the presentation without comment.

Trailing Amendment on Data Collection

Several technical points were discussed with Council staff. It was clarified that the data collection from the processors would be at the plant level and not the firm level. It was noted that as a major area of concern is the collection and allocation of fixed costs to crab-specific operations. It may be helpful for Council staff to differentiate between fixed costs that are unrecoverable (sunk) vs. those that are.

The SSC notes that if the data are aggregated prior to submission, the quality and type of economic analyses will be affected. For example: statistical analysis of variations in reported data would not be characteristic of the actual level of variability in the industry; erroneous conclusions may be made in examining average costs data over a very large and very small processor and/or vessels; it may not be possible, depending on aggregation requirements, to identify economic impacts on some of the more remote Alaska coastal communities; and, observation and reporting errors, or outliers in individual data, cannot be separated out from the aggregated data. The researchers who use the data should both be responsible for the use of the data and accountable (to the extent possible) for the accuracy of data used. **In the opinion of the SSC separating the individual data from the researchers who use the data is undesirable. Therefore, the SSC recommends that the data committee work on resolving issues that currently serve as obstacles to accessing unaggregated data.**

Trailing Amendment on Mandatory Binding Arbitration

The SSC was briefed on the committee progress on binding arbitration. The SSC was informed on the scaling down of the arbitration options to three preseason structures which include a combined fleet-wide processor negotiation, combined fleet-wide negotiation with individual processors and individual vessel negotiations with individual processors. Dr. Charlie Plott (Cal Tech) will provide Council staff with an analysis of arbitration structures using experimental methods. **The SSC agreed with Council staff that the study should be based on generic bargaining structures as opposed to specific features of the crab industry.** The reason for this recommendation is that attempts to represent the levels of strategic knowledge and past bargaining relationships would cloud an exploration of the intrinsic properties of alternative arbitration structures. The SSC looks forward to reviewing the study. **The SSC recommends that the analysis include a review of other applications of binding arbitration in fisheries or similar industries.**

Additional Trailing Amendments

The SSC was presented analysis on: (1) revisions to the rules governing the allocation of catch history to sunken vessels, (2) options for allocating a portion of the Western Aleutian Islands (Adak) golden king crab fishery to the community of Adak; and, (3) options for increased harvest share ownership and use caps for CDQ groups.

The only substantive SSC comment pertained to the issue of community protection. A cooling off period is proposed as a way of protecting communities from rapid reduction in capital. This cooling off period is intended to allow communities time to adapt to economic changes resulting from capital reduction. However, the SSC notes that by the time crab rationalization actually takes place will be, in all likelihood, an off period of several years and that an additional cooling off period for an extended amount of time may not be needed.

C-1 (b) CRAB MANAGEMENT: EIS

The SSC was informed that progress on the EIS is crawling along at a snail pace.

C-1 (c) CRAB MANAGEMENT: Pribilof Blue King Crab Rebuilding Plan

Diana Stram presented directions/alternatives on Pribilof blue king crab rebuilding plan. The SSC notes that in the rebuilding plan and in discussions on why the blue king crab stocks are depressed, there should be an analysis on what predators feed on blue king crab, if there has been a change in the number of predators, and if the predator-prey relationships have been changing.

C-3 Essential Fish Habitat

The SSC heard a report from Cathy Coon summarizing the recommendations of the EFH committee on alternatives to mitigate the effects of the fishery on essential fish habitat. The focus of the proposed alternatives was on reducing the impact of the bottom trawl fishery on benthic fish habitat.

In addition, the SSC received public testimony from Thorn Smith (North Pacific Longline Association), Ben Enticknap (Alaska Marine Conservation Council), Whit Sheard (Ocean Conservancy), Geoff Shester (Oceana), Ed Richardson (Pollock Conservation Cooperative), Simeon Swetzof (Mayor of St Paul), and Lori Swanson (Groundfish Forum).

The SSC found the alternatives difficult to evaluate because there was no statement of goals or objectives of the mitigation effort. There was no clear rationale for the particular closures proposed. We are unable to determine whether the closed areas are intended to achieve a specific reduction in fishery impacts or establish a specific percentage of protected habitat. Nor can we tell whether the emphasis is on protecting habitat that supports commercially important fish species or protecting specific biogenic habitat features. Some benthic habitats are known to be sensitive to and slow to recover from disturbance, e.g., corals and sponges. Mitigation measures may be aimed explicitly at avoiding adverse fishery impacts on this type of habitat. Moreover, simple protection of areas with known catches of adult fishes is not necessarily the only or best way to safeguard EFH. For example, habitats that form juvenile nursery areas may be lightly fished, but could be as important to protect from fishing impacts as those producing more substantial commercial catches of fishes. Thus, it is extremely important that the Council and EFH Committee articulate the specific purpose of the proposed mitigation measure and the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the measure in achieving their goals.

The SSC recommends that the document should:

1. Specify the goals of the EFH program so that there is a basis for evaluating the alternatives.
2. Describe the rationale used in developing the alternatives.
3. Explicitly state what the triggers for mitigation are and state at what point mitigation is required.
4. Include an evaluation of ways to mitigate fishery impacts other than time/area closures, e.g., gear modification and effort reduction.
5. Structure alternatives so that we can gather information that allows us to evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures on the relationship between fishing and habitat and the resultant impacts on fish productivity.
6. Address mitigation measures for non-trawl as well as trawl gear. (All measures proposed are directed at mitigating only trawl gear impacts).
7. Include MPAs in the suite of possible fishery mitigation measures (these appear to have been summarily rejected from the proposed alternatives.)
8. Evaluate SSL closed areas on their merit as EFH protection, rather than consider them as part of the status quo.

9. Address the extent of fishing effort or fishing area affected by the proposed mitigation measure so there is a common metric to evaluate the impacts of the measures on the fishery.
10. Evaluate the effect of concentrating displaced fishing effort from proposed closed areas into remaining open areas.

D-1(a) Review of BSAI/GOA Groundfish FMP Harvest Management Strategy

A summary of findings and recommendations was reported by Dr. Dan Goodman (University of Montana), chair of the scientific committee commissioned by the Council to review the harvest strategy currently used in the BSAI and GOA groundfish management plans. Public comment was provided by Ed Richardson (Pollock Conservation Cooperative).

The SSC believes that the review committee conducted a thorough and thoughtful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current harvest strategy. It is remarkable that this internationally acclaimed panel of experts could be assembled to participate and complete this detailed review so quickly.

The review committee characterizes the current NPFMC harvest strategy as consisting of four stages: specification of an OY range for the groundfish complex; assignment of stocks to tiers based on the availability of stock characteristic information; determination of OFL, ABC, and status relative to overfishing; and setting TAC as no greater than the ABC. In current practice, the OY specification is historical and has not undergone regular reconsideration or revision. The second and third stages are well-characterized scientific determinations and thus amenable to evaluation. Because the final step is ad hoc, it is amenable to ex post review of actual decisions but unsuited to a priori evaluation of future decisions. Consequently, the review committee report primarily focuses on the second and third stages of the harvest strategy.

Overall, the review committee findings are favorable with respect to the historic record of the current BSAI/GOA groundfish harvest management system:

*ver time the evolution of this management system has been in the direction, overall, of greater conservatism. By the standards of most of the world large commercial fisheries, this management system is conservative.*¹

and,

*"Overall, the current NPFMC approach to advising on ABCs appears to meet the requirements of MSFCMA, from a single-species/target-stock management perspective for most of the target stocks (the exceptions are primarily the rockfish)."*²

Nevertheless, the committee interjects several important caveats regarding potential vulnerabilities of the operation of the management strategy and offers recommendations that warrant timely consideration by the Council, NMFS, and the research community. We highlight a few of the most prominent recommendations in our comments, below.

1. Revisit the BSAI and GOA groundfish OY ranges he current BSAI and GOA groundfish OY ranges were established in 1984 (BSAI amendment 1) and 1987 (GOA amendment 15), respectively. Memory suggests that these limits were intended to be conservative to allow for trophic and technological

¹ Executive Summary, page 4, paragraph 2.

² Section 3.12, page 76, paragraph 1.

interactions among target species. Nevertheless, the degree of conservatism and the logical underpinnings for a particular level of conservatism are not clearly explained. In addition, the review committee notes that ocean conditions, target and non-target stock abundances have changed in the ensuing years. Therefore, the review committee recommends that it would be prudent to revisit the rationale for and specific magnitude of the overall groundfish OY ranges, with particular focus on the explicit linkages to environmental conditions that precipitate to changes in ocean productivity and species abundance. **The SSC concurs with this recommendation.**

2. Management Strategy Evaluation he properties of a management system are not the simple union of the properties of the subcomponents. The review committee advises that an MSE could provide a better understanding of the robustness of the ABC harvest strategy relative to alternative harvest management strategies, especially in the context of shifts in ocean productivity. The review committee recommends that the MSE be based on data from an actual fishery, incorporate realistic assessment models, and explicitly represent uncertainty due to process error, observation error, model error, and implementation error. **The SSC recommends that the feasibility of conducting a MSE analyses be assessed and the results reported to the SSC at its February 2003 meeting**

It is important to note that the committee finds that the structure of the current harvest strategy fails to guarantee increasingly conservative harvest strategies at lower information levels within or between tiers. Nevertheless, the committee suggests that the actual implementation of the harvest strategy may ensure increased conservatism at lower levels of uncertainty and suggests that an MSE of the BSAI pollock fishery could be used to explore whether the present tier structure actually provides the intended increase in conservatism for higher tier (lower information/higher uncertainty) stocks.

The review committee also recommends that MSE be used to evaluate the potential utility of multi-species or ecosystem models. **While the SSC is sympathetic to the intuitive appeal of multi-species/ecosystem models, we note that in practice, simple models often outperform complex models due to the sampling error associated with complex interactions present in the more complex models. Thus multispecies models might provide useful projections of the overall change in an ecosystem and yield inaccurate forecasts of individual species population trends. Nevertheless, the SSC encourages continued development of multispecies and ecosystem models because of the potentially beneficial insights that such models may provide to improvement and of single species models. At the same time, the SSC encourages ongoing development of single species models because of their well-defined statistical properties and often sophisticated treatment of uncertainties.**

3. Ecosystem Issues he review committee report concludes that the current single-species MSY-based approach to setting F_{ABC} makes:

only a slight adjustment for possible ecosystem needs; while the TAC setting adjustment downward from ABC allows for a considerably (sic) reduction in harvest, but the procedure for doing so is ad hoc.

The committee recommends: continued and expanded monitoring of the ecosystem; development of adaptive experimental designs incorporating spatio-temporal exclusion zones; and, exploration of harvest strategies that ensure constant prey availability to predators.

In addition, the SSC is interested in exploring modifications to amendments 56/56 that account for differences in life history characteristics among species within tiers, to ensure that harvest strategies are more conservative for high tier (low information) stocks, to modify tiers 4, 5, and 6 to include abundance based adjustments to the ABC and OFL, and to create incentives for moving stocks from higher to lower tiers.

D-1(b) BSAI Rockfish Management

At its October 2002 meeting the Council requested that the National Marine Fisheries Service review rockfish management for 2003. It was suggested that such a review should include an examination of the ability to reliably identify species in the shortraker/rougheye group and the need to apportion the TAC for shortraker/rougheye among the eastern Bering Sea sub-area and three Aleutian Islands sub-areas. The Council also requested a discussion of long-term management of the red rockfish complex. NMFS Regional Office Staff members Sue Salvesson and Andy Smoker presented an overview of a discussion paper that was prepared to address the Council request. As noted in our SAFE discussions below, there is a need to examine our approach to rockfish management. The SSC is supportive of the Agency efforts to address this issue.

D-1(d) Final BSAI Groundfish Specifications

SPECIAL CONCERNS

The following concerns apply to both Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska rockfish resources.

Rockfishes are exceptionally longlived species, characterized by sporadic and infrequent recruitment, low productivity, and for many species, strong site fidelity. These life history characteristics make them especially vulnerable to overfishing, and once overfished, rebuilding can take decades. The SSC is concerned that management of multi-species complexes and management of stocks across broad geographic areas creates the potential to overfish individual stocks. These undesired outcomes could occur particularly if complex exploitation rates are too high for less productive members of the complex or where spatially discrete local stock aggregations go undetected.

The SSC has expressed concerns about species complex management and individual rockfish species management for several years. The first step in addressing these problems was the formation of an ad hoc Other Species working group who are developing a framework for decision-making on the topic of aggregating/disaggregating species within complexes. While the SSC has no evidence to suggest that overfishing any rockfish species or stock is imminent, the SSC cautions that the consequences of overfishing one or more of these rockfish stocks could be severe. Action to prevent this from happening should be undertaken as soon as possible, preferably before the 2004 TAC setting process.

In addition, to the original charge for the working group, development of a framework for splitting out species from complexes, the SSC asks that a white paper be developed that addresses the following specific questions for each species:

1. Are current management approaches appropriate; do they effectively provide for conservation of rockfish resources?
2. Are surveys effectively estimating stock abundance and providing requisite demographic data?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of survey data and how might surveys be improved?
4. Is knowledge of individual species life history adequate? Do we have reliable estimates of natural mortality, maturity, and growth?
5. Do we know the stock structure for managed species?

Where data deficiencies are noted, the white paper should identify the specific steps to be taken to acquire the needed data.

The paper should make specific recommendations for determining species-specific and area specific precautionary ABCs where appropriate. We recognize that data voids will exist, but these should not be

used as an excuse to avoid implementing alternative management approaches to effectively conserve rockfish resources.

POLLOCK

EBS: The EBS pollock population continues to be strong, holding at near record levels of abundance. Current age 3+ biomass is estimated to be 11.1 million mt. The population continues to be supported by the above average 1996 year-class. ABC is determined under tier 1.a. Projected 2003 spawning biomass is 3.3 million t, with F_{MSY} set at 0.52. **The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommended ABC of 2.3 million mt.** OFL levels for this stock are 3.53 million mt at a fishing mortality rate (F_{OFL}) of 1.1

AI: Aleutian Island pollock ABC is set using tier 5 procedures. The 2002 bottom trawl survey estimated biomass has increased 69% compared to the 2000 survey biomass. **The SSC concurs with the Plan Team Aleutian Islands pollock ABC set at 39,400 mt.** This is based on a harvest rate of 75% of M where $M=0.30$, and biomass of 175,000 mt estimated from bottom trawl survey. OFL is 52,600 mt.

Bogoslof: **The SSC disagrees with the Plan Team recommended ABC.** Under tier 5 the maximum ABC for the Bogoslof area is estimated to be 34,000 mt (Plan Team ABC recommendation) with a companion OFL of 45,300 mt. Traditionally, the SSC has recommended down-weighting the ABC proportionately to the ratio of current to target stock biomass following the tier 3 b procedure. Current stock biomass is estimated at 227,000 mt (down slightly from the 2001 estimate). Previously, the SSC has estimated a B_{target} of 2 million mt. We treat the target biomass as a proxy for $B_{40\%}$. The $F_{40\%}$ level is set at 0.27, and thus the tier 3.b. adjusted F_{ABC} is 0.018.

$$F_{ABC} = F_{40\%} \left(\frac{B_{2002}}{B_{40\%}} - 0.05 \right) / (1 - 0.05) = 0.27 \left(\frac{226,000}{2,000,000} - 0.05 \right) / (1 - 0.05) = 0.18$$

The resultant down-weighted ABC is 4,070 mt.

PACIFIC COD

The SSC appreciates the authors attention to SSC comments from the December 2001 minutes with respect to model configuration for selectivity and retrospective analyses, and looks forward to future developments of spawner-recruit relationships for BS/AI cod.

This year biomass estimate from the EBS bottom trawl survey is 26% below the estimate for 2001 and near the historical low. The biomass estimate for the Aleutian Islands survey in 2002 was 39% below the estimate for 2000 and represents the historical low. On the other hand, projected spawning biomass for 2003 is up 4% from the 2002 assessment, and revised $F_{40\%}$ and $F_{35\%}$ are up substantially from last year.

Pacific cod qualify for management under tier 3b, because projected biomass for 2003 is slightly below $B_{40\%}$. Fishing at $F_{40\%} = 0.35$ would result in a 2003 catch of 278,000 t, which is the maximum permissible ABC under Amendment 56. The authors recommend an ABC of 245,000 t based on a risk-averse optimization procedure that considers uncertainty in estimates of survey catchability and natural mortality.

The Plan Team recommends an ABC for 2003 equal to 223,000 t, which represents the status quo from 2002, corresponding to $F = 0.27$, owing to the following concerns: (1) a nearly continuous decline in spawning biomass since 1988; (2) of the five most recent year classes, three were below average and two were average; and (3) abundance may be overestimated due to assumed values of survey catchability and natural mortality and their combined effects on estimated parameters for growth and selectivity. Despite

the assumption that trawl catchability is equal to 1, estimated age 3+ biomass is much greater than survey biomass. The team had difficulty to fully accept this discrepancy and they are concerned that a comparison of 2002 shelf and slope surveys may not support the notion that the slope supports large amounts of large cod implied by the assessment to be missing from the shelf survey.

The SSC shares these concerns of the Plan Team, and endorses the team recommended ABC of 223,000 t for 2003. Also, the SSC endorses the Plan Team recommended OFL of 324,000 for 2003, based on $F = 0.41$ from the tier 3b formula.

YELLOWFIN SOLE

The stock assessment for yellowfin sole is a straightforward update of last year assessment that includes new catch and survey information. The SSC supports the plan team recommendation for ABC and OFL for yellowfin sole:

Age 2+ biomass = 1,550,000 mt
OFL = 136,000 mt
ABC = 114,000 mt

GREENLAND TURBOT

The SSC concurs with the stock assessment authors and the plan team and recommend setting the ABC at a value lower than the maximum permissible (14,700 mt) because of concerns for continued stock decline and lack of substantive recruitment since 1982. Although the stock qualifies for tier 3 management, the plan team recommended using Stock Projection Scenario 4 to set F_{ABC} . This scenario averages model estimated fishing mortality rates from 1997 to 2001, then uses the averaged rate (0.10) to project catch into the future. OFL is calculated using the tier 3 algorithm where $F_{OFL} = 0.32$. This results in the following values for 2003:

Age 1+ biomass = 112,000
OFL = 17,800
ABC = 5,880

The SSC recommends that this averaging process be re-evaluated following next year slope survey. Should this survey confirm the observed low stock levels found in the 2002 survey, then the SSC recommends that we accept that the stock is in a low productivity regime and calculate ABC as per established procedure (i.e. using the tier 3 methodology).

ARROWTOOTH FLOUNDER

This year assessment includes a new split sex model enabling estimation of a separate natural mortality rate for males and females. The new model also led to a change in estimated selectivity for both males and females that accounts for the relatively large changes in F_{40} and F_{35} levels from previous years. The SSC supports the plan team and stock assessment authors recommendations for arrowtooth flounder values for 2003:

Age 1+ biomass = 597,000
OFL = 139,000
ABC = 112,000

ROCK SOLE

This year stock assessment features several significant changes from previous assessments. These changes have resulted in a large reduction in estimated biomass, ABC and OFL due to a change in model

parameters, notably the estimate of catchability. In this year assessment, catchability was estimated by the model instead of assigning a catchability of 1.0. Doing this, catchability was estimated at 1.8, a value that suggests herding by the trawl warps. The authors corroborated this finding with experimental data indicating that the bridles used on the standard research trawl do, in fact, tend to herd rock sole into the net. The SSC accepts the plan team recommendations for rock sole. The recommended values for 2003 are:

Age 2+ biomass = 877,000
OFL = 132,000
ABC = 110,000

FLATHEAD SOLE

This year assessment is a straightforward update of last year assessment, incorporating new catch, discard, survey biomass, and length composition data. The new model also includes sex specific age-length matrices. The SSC supports the plan team recommendations for ABC and OFL. The values for 2003 are:

Age 3+ biomass = 550,000
OFL = 81,000
ABC = 66,000

The SSC notes that the spawner recruitment function appears to fit the data well, and recommends that movement to tier 1 be evaluated for next year.

ALASKA PLAICE

This year assessment is a straightforward update of last year assessment. The SSC supports the plan team recommendations for ABC and OFL. The values for 2003 are:

Age 1+ biomass = 1,080,000
OFL = 165,000
ABC = 137,000

The SSC again notes that the spawner recruit function appears to fit the data well and recommends that Alaska plaice be re-considered for movement to tier 1.

OTHER FLATFISH COMPLEX

The SSC supports the plan team recommendation for ABC and OFL. The values for 2003 are:

Age 1+ biomass = 107,000
OFL = 21,400
ABC = 16,000

The SSC notes that the stock assessment authors estimated M (natural mortality) for this complex from species not in the complex. These values of M may or may not be appropriate; the SSC recommends that the assessment authors evaluate estimates of M for species in the complex (starry flounder, dover sole, rex sole, etc.).

SABLEFISH

See GOA Sablefish recommendations.

PACIFIC OCEAN PEARCH

This year assessment was updated with 2001 AI fishery age data, updates of 2001 catch data, and preliminary 2002 catch data. The AFSC has initiated a biennial slope survey in 2002 which will be examined for modeling in the future. For the second year, the EBS and AI POP are modeled as a single population. There really is not an alternative, because there is little quality survey data for the EBS population. Biological age-length and weight-length relationships do not indicate that the EBS and AI populations are different.

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team determination under Tier 3b of $F_{ABC}=0.047$; and $F_{OFL}=0.056$. These values result in an ABC of 15,100 mt and an OFL=18,000 mt. The areal apportionment based on past AI surveys and the recent 2002 slope survey estimates that 16% of the POP are in the EBS. This results in an ABC apportionment of 2,410 mt in the EBS, and 12,660 mt in the AI. The AI apportionment based on the 5 most recent surveys is: Area 541= 3,500 mt, Area 542=3,340 mt, and Area 543=5,850 mt.

OTHER RED ROCKFISH

The SSC heard public testimony from Carl Haflinger, Ed Richardson, and Dorothy Childers.

The 2001 catches were revised and preliminary 2002 catches were added to the analysis. The 2002 AI survey biomass estimates were also included. Other Red Rockfish consists of Northern rockfish and the Shortraker/Rougheye complex. In 2001 and 2002 it was recommended by the Plan Team and the SSC that shortraker/rougheye be managed at the species level. Resulting meetings by the NMFS regional office and the Observer Program resulted in a project (being tested in 2003) to provide improved data for identification of shortraker and rougheye rockfish in the commercial catch. While the species identification program is being evaluated, and until such a program results in data improvement, the SSC concurs that we cannot manage shortraker and rougheye rockfish at the species level. We remain concerned that management by species complex may not provide adequate conservation benefits to individual species within the complex.

Shrotraker/Rougheye Rockfish: **The SSC concurs with the Plan Team ABC recommendation for ABC and OFL levels for these species using Tier 5 procedures. Accepted values of M are 0.025 for rougheye and 0.030 for shortraker. Biomass is derived from the EBS and AI slope bottom trawl survey by averaging 1988, 1991, 2002 species estimates for the EBS surveys and 1991-2002 estimates for the AI surveys. The F_{ABC} exploitation rate was set at 0.75M and F_{OFL} was set M.**

The resulting ABC and OFL were:

Species	Area	ABC	OFL
shortraker/rougheye	BSAI	967	1,289

Northern Rockfish: For northern rockfish in the AI, the SSC concurs with the stock assessment authors, estimating ABC and OFL using Tier 5 and $M=0.06$. However, for northern rockfish in the EBS, the SSC concluded that there was no reliable estimate of northern rockfish biomass for the EBS. **Therefore the SSC recommends calculating the northern rockfish ABC and OFL for the EBS using Tier 6 (1978-1995 average catch):**

Species	Area	ABC	OFL
Northern rockfish	EBS(Tier 6)	121	161
	AI(Tier 5)	6,980	9,332

Public testimony by Carl Haflinger indicated that northern rockfish are predominately caught in the EBS in the 80-100 fathom zone. NMFS bottom trawl shelf surveys sample the shelf at depths out to 100 fm, however, as currently executed this survey has very low sampling density in the 80-100 fm depth strata

and thus may be missing northern rockfish. The slope survey begins at the 100 fm isobath and may also miss the center of the northern rockfish distribution. The SSC believes that northern rockfish biomass estimates from a reconfigured shelf survey could improve abundance estimates for this species. We recommend that NMFS examine whether it is practical to amend the bottom trawl shelf survey design to improve sampling of northern rockfish habitats. We also recommend that stock assessment analysts evaluate whether fisheries CPUE data could be used to estimate abundance.

The SSC notes that there remains considerable uncertainty as to whether the tier 6 calculation we are recommending for Bering Sea northern rockfish ABC is sufficiently precautionary. Until reliable estimates of stock biomass are available for the EBS, we caution that this approach may not adequately protect the resource. We strongly urge that NMFS evaluate all fishery independent and dependent data sources to support robust estimates of abundance by species and area.

OTHER ROCKFISH

The 2001 catches were revised and preliminary 2002 catches included in this year analysis. Biomass estimates are included from the 2002 AI and Bering Sea slope surveys. The other species rockfish complex is comprised of 29 species, but shortspine thornyheads and light dusky rockfish (95%) predominante. **The SSC concurs with Plan Team recommendation** of Tier 5 management for this complex assuming $M=0.07$.

The resulting ABC and OFL are:

Species	Area	ABC	OFL
Other Rockfish	EBS	960	1,280
	AI	634	846

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendation that the decision to manage light dusky rockfish on a single species basis await completion of the Other Species working group analysis.

ATKA MACKEREL

The SSC disagrees with the Plan Team recommended ABC for Atka Mackerel (51,000 mt). Stock condition was estimated with a new model utilizing AD Model Builder. Stock assessment authors explored 13 models in 3 generic classes to test the sensitivity of model assumptions. The SSC agrees with the assessment authors that the new reference mode provides a much improved framework for estimating stock condition and that the reference model is *conservative and reasonable representation of stock dynamics*. The stock assessment authors recommend a maximum ABC estimated under tier 3.a. procedures at 82,800 mt. The Plan Team objected to the authors recommended ABC on four grounds: 1) tentativeness of the model structure, 2) uncertainty in the 2002 bottom trawl survey biomass, 3) a projected drop in spawning biomass below the $B_{40\%}$ level in 2004, and 4) the large increase (+69%) in ABC compared to the current ABC. The Plan Team recommended ABC is based on harvest Scenario 4 (p 7 BSAI SAFE), where model estimated fishing mortality rates for 1997-2001 are averaged and used to project stock biomass and expected yields into the future.

The SSC disagrees that model structure is tentative. The assessment authors responsibly explored sensitivity of their assumptions and have adequately rationalized the choice of the preferred model. The trend in survey biomass is increasing. The 2002 bottom trawl survey biomass estimate has a reasonable confidence interval (20% CV) and is improved over past estimates. The projected reference model 2002 biomass is well below the bottom trawl survey estimated biomass suggesting a conservative estimate of stock abundance, at-least compared to that inferred from fishery independent survey data. The Plan Team concern for bottom trawl survey biomass uncertainty seems unwarranted given these facts. The assessment authors presented two means of promoting a more conservative ABC than the maximum

allowable ABC under tier 3.a. One of these fixed the 2003 catch at 63,000 mt. This catch projection essentially maintains stock biomass at or near $B_{40\%}$ effectively eliminating the Plan Team concern for a near term drop in stock biomass. Additionally, the SSC notes that the 1998 year-class appears very strong.

The SSC recommends setting Atka Mackerel ABC at 63,000 mt. This is substantially below the conservatively estimated maximum allowable ABC while providing a suitable increase in allowable harvest commensurate with the improved inference in stock condition generated by the new model. OFL is estimated from tier 3.a. procedures and is set at 99,700 mt.

SQUID AND OTHER SPECIES COMPLEX

The SSC has previously expressed its concern with the estimation of ABC for squid and other species. The multiplicity of species within the complexes and the variety of life histories they represent complicate the task of assuring responsible conservative harvest recommendations. Compounding this difficulty is the paucity of data, and the lack of precision in available estimates of stock condition. Nevertheless, the Council is obligated to stipulate allowable catches for these species. To do so we utilize a mix of survey biomass estimates and historic catch data following Tier 5 and 6 ABC estimation algorithms.

Squid: There are no reliable biomass estimates for squid. **The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendation to follow Tier 6 ABC estimation procedures for squid using mean catch for the period 1978 to 1995.** Under this procedure OFL is set at the level of average catch and ABC is 75% of the average catch. The estimated ABC and OFL is 1,970 mt and 2,620 mt respectively.

Other Species: The Plan Team believes that the biomass estimates for sharks and octopi are unreliable. They suggest and the SSC agrees that ABCs for these species be estimated using Tier 6 procedures. Tier 6 stipulates that catch should be averaged for the period 1978 to 1995 or some other appropriate period as recommended by the SSC. Reliable catch data for these complexes is only available since the 1990s. **The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendation to base the average catch on 1992-2001 data.** Sculpin and skate ABCs are estimated using Tier 5. The maximum allowable ABC (Plan Team recommendation) for the Other Species complex is shown below.

Species	Biomass	M	Mean Catch	OFL	MAX ABC
Sculpins	213,000	0.15		32,000	24,000
Skates	482,000	0.10		48,200	36,200
Sharks			541	541	406
Octopi			387	387	290
Total				81,128	60,896

In 1998 the SSC recommended using Tier 5 procedures for estimation of Other Species ABC. To do so, exploitation rates based on natural mortality values were assigned to each of the Other Species component complexes (sculpins, skates, sharks and octopi) and multiplied against the estimated bottom trawl survey biomass. The ABCs for each complex were summed to produce the total ABC. At the time, the application of this methodology suggested nearly a 4-fold increase in the maximum allowable ABC. The SSC was uncomfortable adopting such a large increment in allowable catch and implemented a 10-year stair step to move gradually into the ABC. We still have the same concern. Thus we are in the 5th year of the stair-step process.

The SSC stair-step procedure computes the proportion (nth year of the stair-step divided by 10) of the difference between the 1997 Other Species ABC (25,800 mt) and the current estimate of maximum ABC

(60,896 mt) then adds that amount to the 1997 ABC. **Thus the SSC recommended Other Species ABC, after rounding, is 43,300 mt** ($25,800 + (5/10) \cdot (60,896 - 25,800)$). OFL is the sum of the Tier 5 and 6 estimated OFL values for each complex within the Other Species category or 81,100 mt.

The SSC notes that sharks and skates share many of the same life history characteristics of the rockfishes (e.g. late maturity, low productivity, long life spans, low reproductive rates), and warrant particular concern. These life history characteristics make these species especially vulnerable to overfishing and their continued aggregation is not recommended as a long-term management strategy. The SSC strongly recommends that a methodology for ensuring adequate conservation of these species be developed as quickly as possible.

D-1(e) Final GOA Groundfish Specifications

POLLOCK

Dr. Martin Dorn presented the assessment to the SSC. Public testimony was given by Julie Bonnie, Alaska Groundfish Data Bank.

This is an impeccable stock assessment, which fully addresses the concerns raised by the SSC in September. The different model alternatives explore the estimation of catchability and the sensitivity of the stock assessment to data points and data series. In addition, maturity information has been thoroughly reanalyzed. The SSC concurs with the analysts that further research is desirable regarding maturity. It is unclear whether the age and length at maturity are proper random samples from the population, since they are collected only from the aggregated pollock population in Shelikov Strait. Further, it is curious that the age and length at maturity have increased in the last few years, when one might expect a decrease as a population response to decreased abundance.

The GOA pollock stock remains in tenuous condition. The 2001 bottom trawl survey was the lowest on record, and the 2002 Shelikov Strait hydroacoustic survey was also very low. Fortunately, additional survey work in 2002 discovered spawning stock outside of Shelikov Strait in the shelf break and Shumagin Islands areas, suggesting that the proportion returning to Shelikov Strait may have been much lower than in previous years for some reason. This finding is of important consequence to the stock assessment, because it is assumed that a constant proportion of the population returns to Shelikov Strait each year to spawn.

The various surveys are contradictory, in that the Shelikov Strait hydroacoustic survey suggests a declining trend in the 1990s, whereas the bottom trawl and ADF&G surveys have been more stable (except for 2001, as previously mentioned) or even increasing. Consequently, the model averages across these contradictions, attempting to balance the different data sources. The overall trend in the population (Figure 21) suggests a large increase from less than 100,000 mt of female spawning biomass in 1961 to a peak of 750,000 mt in 1983, and then a reduction to 177,000 mt at the present time. (The total population is much larger.) The current level is at about 28% of unfished female spawning biomass and approaching the 20% level that would curtail directed fishing altogether under Steller sea lion protection measures. The current level is also lower than the reference level $B_{40\%}$ of 240,000 mt.

Of the six models evaluated in the analysis, model 2 is the baseline model comparable to last year assessment. Comparison of the results from different models (Table 12) indicates that the most recent data points have strong influence on the estimated biomass (Models 3, 5, 6). Interestingly, removal of the Shelikov Strait survey altogether (Model 4) increases the variability in the assessment, suggesting that removal of this dataset is not warranted. In Model 5, a correction for the underestimate of spawning biomass in 2002 is made, which leads to an increase of biomass. In addition, the data suggest that survey catchability q is well estimated at about 0.7 (Model 1), so that biomass from Model 2, with catchability equal to 1, is probably underestimated. Therefore, the use of the baseline model 2 is likely to be

conservative, because (1) there is no correction for catchability, and (2) there is no correction for a lower proportion returning to Shelikov Strait in 2002, and (3) the biomass and ABC from most other models are higher. Additional conservatism is built into the assessment by: (1) using average recruitment in place of the higher estimated recruitment for the 1999 year-class, and (2) using an even more risk-averse harvest policy than that approved for the Steller sea lion measures.

The SSC concurs with the analysts and the Team in the use of this extremely conservative approach, given the concern about the status of this population. The resulting ABC is 49,590 mt ($F_{ABC}=0.24$) and the overfishing level is 69,410 mt ($F_{OFL}=0.35$). The SSC further supports the breakdown by smaller management areas (47,890 mt, W/C/WYK; 6,460 mt, EYK/SEO).

For future stock assessments, the SSC recommends further exploration of the sensitivity of the data series. In particular, it would be interesting to know whether some of the early values have a strong influence on the extent and peak of the pollock buildup in the 1970s. Further exploration of catchability needs to be made, perhaps with field studies, because the data strongly suggest that catchability can be estimated, As previously mentioned, the net effect of including this estimate would increase biomass across the time period accordingly.

PACIFIC COD

As in the analysis of BS/AI cod, the latest assessment includes separate selectivity schedules for the years 1978-1986, 1987-1999, and 2000-present to reflect changes in the character of this fishery. No new survey data are available, but the assessment was updated with new fishery data.

The SSC supports the authors and Plan Team recommendations for the 2003 specifications: ABC = 52,800 mt and OFL = 70,100 mt under the tier 3b approach. The SSC also support their recommended allocation of ABC among regulatory areas according to the biomass distribution from the three most recent surveys: 39% in western, 55% in central, and 6% in eastern.

FLATFISH

The flatfish group is subdivided into deep water flatfish, rex sole, flathead sole, and shallow water flatfish. This year, flathead sole were separated out of the complex and presented as a separate stock assessment. This year assessments are based on the results from the 2001 NMFS trawl survey. There was no eastern Gulf survey in 2001 and biomass for this area was estimated using the average of the 1993-1999 eastern Gulf biomass estimates. The total flatfish ABC for 2003 declined slightly from 2002 because maturity data for northern and southern rock sole allowed estimation of $F_{40\%}$ and $F_{35\%}$, which resulted in smaller ABCs for those species.

The SSC concurs with the recommendations of the plan team and the recommended 2003 ABCs are as follows:

	ABC	OFL	Exploitable Biomass
Deep Water	4,880	6,430	68,263
Rex Sole	9,470	12,320	71,326
Shallow Water	49,340	61,810	349,992
TOTAL	63,270		489,581

The SSC agrees with the plan team recommendation for regional apportionments:

	WESTERN	CENTRAL	WYAK	EYAK/SEO	TOTAL
Deep Water	180	2,220	1,330	1,150	4,880
Rex Sole	1,280	5,540	1,600	1,050	9,470
Shallow Water	23,480	21,740	1,160	2,960	49,340

ARROWTOOTH FLOUNDER

This year assessment employed a new survey selectivity fit using a two parameter logistic model. The SSC notes that the differences in estimated exploitable biomass between 2002 and 2003 result from the use of a different model, not from a real change in biomass. The SSC also notes that biomass of this species, which has been increasing steadily since the 1970s appears to be peaking. The SSC notes that the biomass of arrowtooth flounder is very large. This species is known to prey heavily on other commercially important species and the SSC recommends that the ecological implications of the continuing increases in abundance be evaluated and possible management options for mitigating these impacts be considered.

The SSC concurs with the plan team recommendations for ABC. The values for 2003 are:

ABC	OFL	Exploitable Biomass
155,140	181,390	1,302,000

Regional apportionments are in proportion to biomass distributions from the 2001 trawl survey.

Western	Central	WYAK	EYAK/SEO	Total
17,990	113,050	18,190	5,910	155,140

FLATHEAD SOLE

The 2003 assessment used an age structured model for flathead sole. The reference rates were much higher than in past assessments because of updated information on length and age-at-maturity. With the adoption of the age-structured assessment, ABC could be estimated under tier 3a procedures rather than tier 5 as used in the past. These changes resulted in a higher ABC estimate for 2003. **The SSC agrees with the Plan Team recommendation for ABC:**

ABC	OFL	Exploitable Biomass
41,390	51,556	132,260

Regional apportionments based on the fraction of 2001 survey biomass in each area are:

Western	Central	WYAK	EYAK/SEO	Total
16,420	20,820	2,900	1,250	41,390

SABLEFISH

Dr. Jim Ianelli gave an overview of the stock assessment. Public testimony was provided by Jerry Merrigan, Prowler Fisheries; Arne Fluglvog, PVOA; Dan Falvey, ALFA; and, Nick Delaney, representing 10 Kokiak longline fishing vessels.

Due to recent increases in survey and fishery CPUE, the status of the sablefish population has changed from small and increasing to moderate and increasing. The stock assessment is contemporary and makes good use of the relevant data sources. The sablefish population increased to a peak in the mid-1960s, declined in the 1970, increased in the 1980, declined in the 1990, and has increased recently. Population biomass is well estimated from the data, with some uncertainty in the future related to the yet unknown strength of the 1998 year-class. The driving factor in sablefish abundance is periodic strong year-classes, the most recent being the 1997 year-class.

The SSC endorses the modeling approach used, the resultant maximum permissible ABC of 25,400 ($F_{40\%adj}=0.129$) obtained from the biomass-based $F_{40\%}$ policy as a starting point for development of an adjusted ABC, and the overfishing level of 30,900 ($F_{OFL}=0.159$). By using the average recruitment

from the 1982 1998 year-classes, the estimated 2003 spawning biomass of 210,000 mt is 39% of the unfished spawning biomass (541,000 mt) and 97% of the reference $B_{40\%}$ level (216,000 mt).

In the past, the analysts adjusted the ABC downward to prevent the biomass from dropping from the most recent level (bundance trend method). This year, despite the more optimistic view of population status, the analysts have again adjusted the ABC downward to prevent biomass from dropping below the historical low level (bundance status method). The analysts conducted a decision analysis with several values of constant catch, along with the adjusted $F_{40\%}$ policy, and calculated the probability of dropping below the historical level. The resulting ABC is 18,400 mt. Like the Plan Team, the SSC disagrees with this approach, because under some catch values the analysts constant catch policy violates the Council $F_{40\%}$ policy. The Plan Team agreed in principle with a reduction of ABC from the maximum permissible but with a different rationale. They recommended the same ABC of 18,400 mt based on the increase in survey biomass.

An examination of Table 4 of the GOA Summary (p.28) shows that the analysts proposed reduction is much larger than for any of the other stocks, including the walleye pollock stock, which is in tenuous condition. In contrast, the sablefish population is thought to be in moderate condition, near the $B_{40\%}$ level. **The SSC believes that a smaller reduction from the maximum permissible ABC is warranted.**

In order to establish an alternative ABC, the SSC considered the projections from the $F_{40\%}$ policy (Figure 5.13, left panel). Due to the declining trend in future biomass, increased variability in future catches would occur if no adjustment to the maximum permissible ABC was made. To balance out the trend in future catches for a more stable policy, **the SSC recommends using the 5-year average of catches under the $F_{40\%}$ policy (Scenario 1: maximum permissible F, Table 5.11, p 271 of GOA SAFE), or 20,900 mt, for ABC.** One additional reason for the averaging is that this assessment is the first to propose a change in status for sablefish. Future assessments should be able to confirm whether this change is stable.

For future assessments, the SSC recommends two considerations. First, the decision analysis should consider policies that are in concert with Council-established policy. Adjustments to maximum permissible ABC should utilize harvest policies like the biomass-based policy established by the Council. Second, the analysts should reevaluate whether to exclude the 1977 1981 year-classes from the calculation of unfished biomass and reference biomass $B_{40\%}$. The recruitment trends in Figure 5.9 do not suggest the presence of a major regime shift. Their inclusion would increase unfished biomass and $B_{40\%}$ and hence might alter the perceived status of the population.

The final step in the process is to apportion the ABC by regions. The SSC endorses the analysts approach, which is a weighted average of the last five years of both fishery and survey information. This results in final ABC of:

2003 Sablefish ABC Apportionment

REGION	BSAI			GOA					Grand Total
	EBS	AI	Subtotal	WGOA	CGOA	WYK	SEO/EYK	Subtotal	
ABC	2,900	3,110	6,010	2,570	6,440	2,320	3,560	14,890	20,900

SLOPE ROCKFISH

Slope rockfish in the GOA are comprised of POP, Northern, Shortraker/Rougheye, and Other slope rockfish. The SSC concurs with the Plan Teams recommendation of dividing this report into three sections: POP, northern rockfish, and shortraker/rougheye with other slope rockfishes so that the assessments will be easier to read.

PACIFIC OCEAN PERCH

The model was updated with catch and age data from the 2001 fishery. For this model q is estimated as being much closer to 1.0 than for the POP model in the EBS/AI. Also, the plot in Fig. 6-10 seems to indicate that q is underestimated. Since this is just the second year under ADMB, further examination of model structure seems warranted. Because results are not out of line with previous assessments including those using the previous stock synthesis models, the SSC concurs with the Plan Team ABC and OFL recommendations under Tier 3a, which utilize an $F_{40\%}$ of 0.05 and an $F_{35\%}$ of 0.06, respectively. The recommended ABC and OFL values are 13,660 mt, and 16,240 mt, respectively. The allocation of ABC in the GOA uses a 2/3 exponential weighting of 1996, 1999, and 2001 survey resulting in ABC and OFL recommendations as follows:

REGION	WGOA	CGOA	EGOA	TOTAL
ABC	2,700	8,510	2,450	13,660
OFL	3,220	10,120	2,900	16,240

Appendix 6-1 contains a Bayesian Analysis of the uncertainty in the POP assessment model. This analysis estimated M , rather than fixing it at $M=0.05$. The result is that M is estimated much lower, q much higher, and ABC is estimated to be much lower. Such an assertion is only appropriate if the data are unbiased and informative concerning M . However, for POP this assumption seems questionable.

NORTHERN ROCKFISH

The model was updated to include 2001 catch, preliminary 2002 catch, fishery age compositions from 2000 and 2001, and fishery length compositions for 1999, 2000, and 2001. The ABC and OFL for northern rockfish are based on Tier 3a, resulting in an $F_{40\%}=0.056$, and $F_{OFL}=0.066$, and an ABC=5,540 mt and OFL=6,565 mt respectively. Area apportionment were done as for POP, resulting in recommended ABC and OFL as:

REGION	WGOA	CGOA	EGOA	TOTAL
ABC	890	4,640	10 ¹	5,540
OFL				6,565

1 10 mt included in WYAK ABC for Other Slope Rockfish

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team on these recommendations.

SHORTRAKER/ROUGHEYE

The shortraker/rougheye assessment has not changed since last year. Again, this years assessment is based on 1996, 1999, 2001 trawl surveys, and treats shortraker as Tier 5 ($M=0.025$) and rougheye as Tier 4 ($M=0.025$, $F_{40\%}=0.032$). As a precaution rougheye $F_{ABC}=M=0.025$, and shortraker $F_{ABC}=0.75M=0.023$; rougheye $F_{OFL}=F_{35\%}=0.035$ and shortraker $F_{OFL}=0.025$. The resulting $ABC=1,620$ mt and $OFL=2,340$ mt, with the ABC further divided using exponentially weighted survey results:

REGION	WGOA	CGOA	EGOA	TOTAL
ABC	220	840	560	1,620
OFL				2,340

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team on these recommendations.

The SSC again reiterates its concern for lumping these species. Landings of the complex exceeded ABC in 2001 and were close to the overall complex ABC in 2002. The SSC notes that observer data indicate that approximately 2/3 of the catch of shortraker/rougheye in recent years in the GOA consists of shortraker (Table 6-3b). The individual species ABC for shortraker in 2002 was 586 mt. The 2002 total catch of the shortraker/rougheye complex was 1,391 mt. If 2/3 of that catch was shortraker, then 927 mt of shortraker were caught, which is far in excess of the shortraker ABC.

OTHER SLOPE ROCKFISH

The Other Slope rockfish assessment was not changed from last year. The other slope rockfish are comprised of 12 species. It would be helpful to know which species are more abundant in other regions than the GOA. The Other slope rockfish assessment is unchanged since last year. Harlequin are treated as Tier 4, and all other rockfish treated as Tier 5. This results in a complex $ABC=5,040$ mt and $OFL=6,610$ mt. Again, exponentially weighting the survey results in a regional ABC apportionment as follows:

REGION	WGOA	CGOA	EGOA	TOTAL
ABC	90	550	4,400	5,050
OFL				6,610

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendation.

PELAGIC SHELF ROCKFISH.

This stock assessment was not changed form last year. This complex is mostly light dusky rockfish (99.7% in 2001). Yellowtail and widow are caught in trace amounts, suggesting that these species are primarily west coast species that are not threatened or endangered in Alaska because these species are at the limits of their range. The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendation using an $F=M=0.09$ strategy which is more conservative than a Tier 4, $F_{40\%}=0.11$ strategy. This results in $ABC=5,490$ mt, and $OFL=8,216$ mt. Again, using exponential weighting 1996, 1999, and 2001 surveys, the following areal recommendations are derived:

2003 Pelagic Shelf Rockfish Apportionment

REGION	WGOA	CGOA	EGOA	TOTAL
ABC	510	3,480	1,500	5,490
OFL				8,220

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendations.

DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH

Over the past 5 years DSR has consisted of 90% yelloweye rockfish. This species is easy to age so age, so the M estimate of $M=0.02$ should be considered fairly reliable for this species. A discussion of estimates of M was added to this draft at the request of the SSC. The main problem is that trawl and tagging estimates of abundance are not considered effective so ADF&G has used manned submersibles and line transect estimates. This assessment was updated with 2001 average weight data, and an increase in estimated habitat of 280 sq. km.. This resulted in an increase in survey biomass to 17,510t. Using a Tier 4 approach, and adjusting for 10% of species other than yelloweye, $F_{ABC}=M=0.02$, resulting in an $ABC=390$ mt. $F_{35\%}=0.0279$ resulting in an $OFL=540$ mt

Area	ABC	OFL
EYAK/SEO	390	540.

The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendations.

SHORTSPINE THORNYHEAD

This year assessment was updated with 2001 catch data and 2002 sablefish longline survey data. The SSC commented in 2001 that the high estimate of M from the model was due to size and age stratification by depth for Thornyhead rockfish. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be sufficient depth stratified size data to currently shed light on this problem. This stock assessment is difficult because thornyhead are difficult to survey and no direct age data are available. Work with radiometric age data seems to be at odds with fishery and survey data. The stock assessment authors have thrown up their hands and gone with a base model, that provided a high $M=0.08$ and a good model fit, despite GSI and early efforts at direct ageing which indicate they are much older. **The SSC concurs with the Plan Team recommendation** based on last years model using a fixed $M=0.038$, and Tier 3a, resulting in $F_{40\%}=0.067$ and an $ABC=2,000$ mt. OFL is calculated using an $F_{35\%}=0.102$, and the base model resulting in an $OFL=3,050$ mt. Areal ABC was based on the results of 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999 surveys were:

2003 Shortspine Thornyhead Rockfish Apportionment

REGION	WGOA	CGOA	EGOA	TOTAL
ABC	360	840	800	2,000
OFL				3,050

ATKA MACKEREL

The SSC concurs with the authors and Plan Team in concluding that Atka mackerel in the GOA should be a bycatch only fishery with an $ABC=600$ mt.

Environmental Assessment/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

NMFS Regional Office staff members Mary Furuness and Tom Pearson presented a brief description of the draft EA/IRFA. No action was taken by the SSC.

ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES
Anchorage Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska
 December 2-6, 2002

Advisory Panel members in attendance:

Alstrom, Ragnar	Fraser, Dave
Benson, Dave	Fuglvog, Arne
Boisseau, Dave	Kandianis, Teressa
Bruce, John (Chair)	Jacobsen, Bill
Burch, Alvin	Mayhew, Tracey
Cross, Craig	Norosz, Kris
Ellis, Ben	Olson, Eric
Enlow, Tom	Preston, Jim
Falvey, Dan	Ridgway, Michelle
Fields, Duncan	Steele, Jeff
Farr, Lance	Stephan, Jeff
	Yeck, Lyle

C-1 CRAB MANAGEMENT

Captain QS:

The AP recommends adopting the Captain's QS committee's recommendations as a preferred alternative with an added option under the loan program to create a zero down payment provision for crew members. *Motion passed 17/4.*

A motion to require regional and processing designation during the 3 year lease period failed 5/16.

Sideboards:

The AP recommends the Council select the following as the preferred sideboard alternative:

Option 1 (a): Non-AFA vessels that qualify for QS in the rationalized opilio crab fisheries would be limited to their GOA groundfish catch history excluding sablefish. The sideboards would be based on the history of vessels subject to the caps, applied in aggregate, on an area specific basis, and apply jointly to both the vessel and the license.

Combine options 2 and 3: Vessels with less than 100,000lbs total opilio history during the qualifying years and more than 500MT of total cod history during the qualifying years would be exempt from the sideboard cap. *Motion passed 12/9.*

Option 4: Vessels with less than 100MT total groundfish landings in the qualifying period would be prohibited from participating in the GOA cod fishery.

The AP also recommends that the Council require crab coops to limit their members to their aggregate cod catch in both federal and state waters to the sideboarded amount. We request staff examine how this integrates with the existing coop structure in the preferred alternative. The AP encourages identification of enforcement options available to the coop which will ensure compliance with parallel fishery limitations. *Motion passed 20/0/1.*

Data Collection:

The AP notes its appreciation of the report and hard work by the Crab Data Collection committee and by staff from the Council, NMFS, and ADF&G, and recommends that the Council direct the Committee to continue its work. In particular, the AP recommends that the Committee be directed to provide recommendations at the February Council meeting on the aggregation of data and its importance in protecting industry proprietary and confidential information. Recommendations should cover both data analyses that are presented to the Council and the public, and industry raw data that is provided to staff for purposes of analysis. The Committee should review Section 8 of Appendix 3-7,

prepared by staff and presented to the public at this meeting, and provide recommendations on the issues raised by staff.

The AP also recommends that the Council not make decisions on the data collection system at this meeting, but wait until it has the entire package in front of them, particularly since no decisions were scheduled or noted to the public for this meeting.

Finally, the AP recommends both the binding arbitration committee and the data collection committee identify data needs associated with the binding arbitration process and the integration of these needs. *Motion passed 16/5.*

Motion passed 20/0.

A motion to re-examine AFA crab processing caps once rationalization is in effect failed 7/10.

Community Protection:

The AP recommends that under the community protection provisions, an option be added designating Kodiak as an "open port;" that is, Bering Sea crab delivered to Kodiak would be exempt from processor and/or regionalization limitations. *Motion passed 14-6.*

Additional Sunken Vessel Provision:

In section 1.4.1, the AP recommends adoption of the additional sunken vessel provision, using 100% of the vessels' average history for the qualifying years. *Motion passed 19/0.*

CDQ Caps:

In section 3.4.1.2, the AP recommends the Council amend the proposal and analysis of CDQ ownership and Use caps to include analysis of the same range of caps for non-CDQ participants, (*Motion passed 14/7*) with the clarification that the same harvest QS caps apply to all non-CDQ participants. *Motion passed 19/1.*

C1 (b) Crab EIS

The AP recommends the following alternatives be included in the Crab EIS:

1. A one pie system using same qualifying years, transferability, use and coop provisions as the preferred alternative, integrated with the regionalization, skipper shares and binding arbitration process.
2. A one pie system as above, with the addition of
 - A. a closed class license for processors using qualifying years in the preferred alternative. (Option 2 from October 2002 AP minutes).
 - B. Coop formation with the processor to which the vessel delivered the majority of their crab harvest in the year prior to implementation.
 - C. A 10%, one year penalty provision for movement between coops without the agreement of both coops.
3. Finally, the AP recommends dropping the current no fishing EIS alternative as it does not meet the reasonable standard described in NMFS' letter. *Motion passed 16/5.*

C-2 Gulf of Alaska Rationalization

The AP recommends the Council endorse the committee's recommendations to:

1. Develop a discussion paper on the elements and options;
2. Formally request a legal opinion from NOAA GC on TURFS;
3. Initiate a second discussion paper on a separate timeline from the elements and options on processes currently underway addressing bycatch of salmon, crab, herring and other forage fish and their relationship to the GOA rationalization process.

Further, the AP requests that ADF&G provide the information requested by the Council by the February Council meeting on the State water P.cod fishery.

Motion passed 23/0

Additionally, the AP requests that two other proposals (attached as appendices to the minutes) on the CP sector be included in the discussion paper as stand alone proposals: C/P Trawl Proposal - Fishermen's Finest and Groundfish Forum. *Motion passed 16/7.*

The AP would also request that the longline C/P Elements and Options paper be included in the discussion paper, with additions in elements 5, 8, and 9 of adding an option of history based on years 95-02. *Motion passed 15/8.*

Minority Report

The undersigned members of the AP oppose the inclusion of the C/P proposals as separate alternatives in the discussion paper. In essence, the C/P proposals are preferred alternatives. It is premature to select a preferred alternative at this time. It is also inconsistent with the current process to focus the discussion paper on a preferred alternative for one sector and not others. A more appropriate approach would be to have the discussion paper identify what elements of the C/P proposals are not included in the main suite of options, and discuss issues associated with these elements. Signed, Dan Falvey, Duncan Fields, Jeff Stephan, Michelle Ridgway, and Tracey Mayhew.

C-3 EFH

The AP recommends the Council adopt the EFH Committee's recommendations with the following additions and corrections:

The EFH Committee's Problem Statement:

The productivity of the North Pacific ecosystem is acknowledged to be among the highest in the world. The Council intends to ensure the continued sustainability of FMP species by considering additional, precautionary and reasonable management measures. Recognizing that in the North Pacific, potential changes in productivity may be caused by fluctuations in natural oceanographic conditions, fisheries, and other, non-fishing activities, the Council intends to take action in compliance with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act to protect the productivity of FMP species by considering additional measures to reduce adverse effects of fishing activities on habitat essential to managed species.

Modify the above problem statement to clarify that the intent of EFH is to maintain sustainable fisheries and minimize impacts on EFH and FMP species. *Motion passed without opposition.*

Alternative 3: To the heading of Alternative 3, after the word rockfish, add the following bolded text to the heading: **"on upper slope area of the GOA (200-1000 meters)"** *Motion passed 19-0.*

Alternative 4: Change the rotating closed periods to 4 years of 10% of the block, restarting rotation after 40 years. *Motion passed 13/8*
A motion to amend the above motion to change the rotating closed periods to 4 years of 20% of the block, restarting rotation after 20 years, failed 10/11.
A motion to remove Semisopocnoi Island from alternative 4 and add it to alternative 5 failed 10/11.

Alternative 5: Change the rotating closed period to 25% of each block, restarting rotation after 16 years. *Motion passed 12/8.*
Within the "Gulf of Alaska" paragraph, add the following bolded text to the sentence: "Additionally, prohibit the use of bottom trawl gear for targeting GOA slope rockfish species **"on upper slope area of the GOA (200-1000 meters)"** *Motion passed 19/0.*

Alternative 7: The AP does not support the EFH Committee's recommendation to reevaluate alternative 7, (20% no-take marine reserves) . *Motion passed 11/8*

A motion to add Alternative 5 from the Council's October motion as a new alternative 6 in the EIS alternatives failed 9/12.

A motion to narrow the language in the Alternative to consider only gorgonian corals (delete sponges and sea onions) failed 4/13/2.

A motion to apply the areas listed in the EFH Committee's new alternative 5 or alternative 2 as a no take zone (for a new alternative 7) failed 5/14/2.

The main motion passed 16/4/1.

Minority Report

The minority recommends that the Council adhere to the EFH Committee's mitigation alternatives. Extensive public input, all scientific and local knowledge made available to the committee, fishery data provided to the committee, and rationales discussed among committee members went into the crafting of the alternatives drafted. The minority feels that the negotiated areas mapped by the committee represent reasonable compromises for conducting the EIS analysis. Signed, Dan Falvey, Michelle Ridgway, Duncan Fields

C-4 AFA

Access to the directed trawl fishery for Pacific cod for the period of January 20 through February 25th in area 655430 shall be limited to (1) vessels which have a history of economic dependence upon the winter Bering Sea Pacific cod fisheries, as demonstrated by average January and February deliveries of at least 250,000 lbs for 4 out of the 5 pervious years of 1995-1999, and (2) the cod exempt AFA catcher vessels, and (3) AFA non-exempt Bering Sea catcher vessels not to exceed a daily average of 10 vessels for the period of January 20 - February 25th (except for vessels qualifying under item 1 above).

Exceeding this 10-vessel limit in 2003 or any later year by the AFA non-exempt catcher vessels will trigger an area closure to Pacific cod fishing the immediately following year. The closure area, if triggered, is defined as the same area closed for the NMFS Cod Fishery Interaction Study (Cape Sarichef Test Area). The triggered closure would be in effect for the period of January 20 through February 25th, and would apply to all AFA cod non-exempt vessels participating in the BSAI directed cod fishery (except for vessels qualifying under item 1 above).

The 10-vessel limit for AFA non-exempt catcher vessels and trigger mechanism shall not apply for any period from February 1 of any given year until at least 2 non-AFA vessels that meet the threshold standard of at least 250,000 lbs in 4 out of the 5 years of 1995-1999 are fishing for Pacific cod in ADFG stat area 655430. This regulatory action will terminate upon rationalization of the BSAI Pacific cod fishery.

Motion passed 17-1.

D-1 (d, e) Groundfish Management

The AP requests the Council approve the SAFE reports and the EA for the BSAI and GOA 2003 TACs. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Additionally, the AP adopted the SSC's ABCs as TACs and recommended the following TACs noted in the attachment. *Motion passed 19/0.*

It is the intent of the industry to use the unspecified reserves from the several flatfish categories as a way to achieve optimum yield within the BSAI 2.0 million mt cap. To accomplish this, the 2003 TACs are arranged in such a way as to remove all of the "slack" from the flatfish fisheries TACs such that there may exist the possibility that several of the directed flatfish fisheries could bump up against their quotas prior to the end of the fishing year. As the maximum ABCs for these fisheries are higher than the proposed TACs, and the nonspecified reserves are taken out of the 2.0 million MT optimal yield limit before hand, it is industry's intent to request that NMFS in-season managers add tonnage from the unspecified reserve to any directed flatfish fisheries where catches are anticipated to approach the quota. Used this way, the unspecified reserve adds some flexibility within the flatfish fisheries to adapt to events not anticipated prior to the season, and ultimately should lead to higher groundfish catches for Alaska and the nation. *Motion passed without opposition.*

Finally the AP recommends the Council make the "other species" category a bycatch fishery only in non-CDQ fisheries. *Motion passed without opposition.*

D-1(f) Reauthorization of Amendment 64

The AP recommends that the Council release the EA/RIR of Amendment 64 with the alternatives that are identified in the staff discussion paper, and with the following additions and changes:

Eliminate options 1-6 of the original options. Adopt new options 1-3 (italized) and add a new option *1998-2001*.

Option 1: 1995-1999

Option 2: 1996-2001

Option 3: 1998 -2001

Option 4: 2000, 2001

1. Problem Statement: Revise the Problem Statement to better reflect the current stock status and objectives. The AP further recommends that separate Problem Statements be developed for issues associated with hook-and-line apportionments and pot apportionments.

Motion passed 16/0.

2. Additional options: Add the following options (from United Fishermen's Marketing Assn. letter dated November 22, 2002):

Option 1. Reallocate 50% of the jig gear allocation of BSAI p. cod TAC directly to the "catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear" component of the fixed gear sector, and add such reallocation to the current 1.4 % directed fishing allowance for this component. That is,

- (1) decrease the jig gear allocation of BSAI p. cod TAC from 2% to 1%;
- (2) reallocate 1% of the BSAI p. cod TAC directly to the "catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear" component of the fixed gear sector (i.e., establish a permanent and direct allocation from the BSAI p. cod TAC to the "catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear" component); and
- (3) avoid the reallocation of directed fishing allowances that currently exist among the components of the fixed gear sector.

NEW Option 2. Apportion the 2% jig gear allocation of BSAI p. cod TAC by quarters, and “roll over” unused quarterly jig gear allocations to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” component of the fixed gear sector.

Option 3. Adjust the “roll over” protocol to direct the reallocation of the projected unused amount of BSAI p. cod trawl sector TAC to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” component at such time that the current 1.4% directed fishing allowance to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” is closed (i.e., establish a regulatory priority for reallocation to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” component).

Sub Option 3. Adjust the “roll over” protocol to direct the reallocation of the projected unused amount of “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” directed fishing allowance (some of which may have been previously rolled over to this component from the projected unused amount of the BSAI p. cod trawl sector TAC) as follows: 80% to the “catcher/processor vessels using hook-and-line gear” component, and 20% to the “vessels using pot gear” component.

Option 4. Adjust the “roll over” protocol to direct the reallocation of the projected unused amount of BSAI p. cod jig gear sector TAC to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” component as such time that the current 1.4% directed fishing allowance to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” is closed (i.e., establish a regulatory priority for reallocation to the “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” component).

Sub Option 4. Adjust the “roll over” protocol to direct the reallocation of the projected unused amount of “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” directed fishing allowance (some of which may have been previously rolled over to this component from the projected unused amount of the BSAI p. cod jig gear sector TAC) as follows: 80% to the “catcher/processor vessels using hook-and-line gear” component, and 20% to the “vessels using pot gear” component.

Option 5. Adjust the “roll over” protocol to direct the reallocation of the projected unused amount of the directed fishing allowance for the “catcher vessels using hook-and-line gear” and “catcher vessels less than 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear” components as follows: 80% to the “catcher/processor vessels using hook-and-line gear” component, and 20% to the “vessels using pot gear” component.

Option 6. Reallocate the projected unused amounts of the BSAI p. cod TAC from the jig gear sector and the trawl gear sector as follows: 80 percent to “catcher/processor vessels using hook-and-line gear” component, and 20 percent to the “vessels using pot gear” component.

Motion passed 12/3/1.

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

2002 Specifications and Recommendations for Final 2003 Specifications (mt)

Species	Area	2002 Biomass	2002 OFL	2002 ABC	2002 TAC	2002 Catch*	Plan Team 2003 ABC	SSC 2003 ABC	AP 2003 TAC
Pollock	EBS	9,800,000	3,530,000	2,110,000	1,485,000	1,484,927	2,330,000	2,330,000	1,491,760
	AI	106,000	31,700	23,800	1,000	1,041	39,400	39,400	1,000
	Bogoslof	232,000	46,400	4,310	100	38	34,000	4,070	50
Pacific cod	BSAI	1,540,000	294,000	223,000	200,000	184,937	223,000	223,000	207,500
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	1,597,000	136,000	115,000	86,000	74,861	114,000	114,000	83,750
Greenland turbot	BSAI	208,000	36,500	8,100	8,000	2,753	5,880	5,880	4,000
	BS			67%	67%	2,287			2,680
	AI			33%	33%	466			1,320
Arrowtooth	BSAI	671,000	137,000	113,000	16,000	11,443	112,000	112,000	12,000
Rock sole	BSAI	1,850,000	268,000	225,000	54,000	41,621	110,000	110,000	44,000
Flathead sole	BSAI	695,000	101,000	82,600	25,000	15,419	66,000	66,000	20,000
Alaska plaice	BSAI	1,110,000	172,000	143,000	12,000	12,291	137,000	137,000	10,000
Other flatfish	BSAI	78,300	21,800	18,100	3,000	2,628	16,000	16,000	3,000
Sablefish	EBS	28,000	2,900	1,930	1,930	893	2,550	2,900	2,900
	AI	39,000	3,850	2,550	2,550	994	2,740	3,100	3,100
Pacific Ocean Perch	BSAI	377,000	17,500	14,800	14,800	11,221	15,100	15,100	14,100
	Bering Sea			2,620	2,620	642		2,410	1,410
	Eastern			3,460	3,460	2,758		3,500	3,500
	Central			3,060	3,060	2,971		3,340	3,340
Western			5,660	5,660	4,850		5,850	5,850	
Northern rockfish	BSAI	150,000	9,020	6,760			7,000		
	BS				19	109		121	121
	AI				6741	3,951		6,980	5,879
Shortraker/Rougheye	BSAI	48,000	1,369	1,028			967	967	
	BS				116	99			137
	AI				912	474			830
Other rockfish (incl. sharpchin)	EBS	6,880	482	361	361	399	960	960	960
	AI	12,900	901	676	676	547	634	634	634
Atka mackerel	AI	439,700	82,300	49,000	49,000	43,993	51,000	63,000	60,000
	Eastern			5,500	5,500	5,002		10,650	10,650
	Central			23,800	23,800	20,947		29,360	29,360
	Western			19,700	19,700	18,044		22,990	19,990
Squid	BSAI	n/a	2,620	1,970	1,970	784	1,970	1,970	1,970
Other Species	BSAI	667,000	78,900	39,100	30,825	26,467	60,800	43,300	32,309
BS/AI TOTAL		19,655,780	4,974,242	3,184,085	2,000,000	1,922,532	3,331,001	3,298,792	2,000,000

EBS = eastern Bering Sea

BSAI = Bering Sea & Aleutians

BS = Bering Sea

AI = Aleutian Islands

OFL = overfishing level

ABC = acceptable biological catch

TAC = total allowable catch

PSC limits for red king crab and C. bairdi Tanner crab.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Crab Abundance</u>	<u>PSC Limit</u>
Red King Crab	Zone 1	Below threshold or 14.5 million lbs of effective spawning biomass (ESB)	35,000
		Above threshold, but below 55 million lbs of ESB	100,000
		Above 55 million lbs of ESB	200,000
Tanner Crab	Zone 1	0-150 million crabs	0.5% of abundance
		150-270 million crabs	750,000
		270-400 million crabs	850,000
		over 400 million crabs	1,000,000
Tanner Crab	Zone 2	0-175 million crabs	1.2% of abundance
		175-290 million crabs	2,100,000
		290-400 million crabs	2,550,000
		over 400 million crabs	3,000,000

The AP recommends that Council adopt IPHC staff recommendations for the 2003 CDQ fisheries using the following DMRs:

CDQ Trawls

Atka Mackerel: 0.80
 Bottom pollock: 0.90
 Flathead sole: 0.90
 Pelagic pollock: 0.89
 Rockfish: 0.90
 Yellowfin sole: 0.83

CDQ Longlines

Pacific cod: 0.11
 Turbot: 0.04

CDQ Pots

Pacific cod: 0.02
 Sablefish: 0.46

**PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES
FOR THE BSAI TRAWL AND NON-TRAWL FISHERIES¹**
[All amounts are in metric tons]

TRAWL FISHERIES	Prohibited Species and Zone					
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI ⁷	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red King Crab (animals) Zone 1	C. opilio (animals) COBLZ ²	C. bairdi (animals)	
					Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	886	139	16,664	2,776,981	340,844	1,788,459
January 20 - April 1	262	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
April 1 - May 21	195	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
May 21 - June 29	49	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
June 29 - December 31	380	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Rock sole/flat. sole/other flatfish ³	779	20	59,782	969,130	365,320	596,154
January 20 - April 1	448	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
April 1 - June 29	164	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
June 29 - December 31	167	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RKC savings subarea ³	.....	.....	20,924	.....	.....	.....
Turbot/sablefish/arrowtooth ⁴	.....	9	.....	40,238	.....	.....
Rockfish (June 29 - Dec. 31) ⁵	69	7	.....	40,237	.....	10,988
Pacific cod	1,434	20	13,079	124,736	183,112	324,176
Pollock/Atka/other ⁶	232	146	200	72,428	17,224	27,473
Midwater trawl pollock	.....	1,184	.....	.....	.....	.....
TOTAL TRAWL PSC	3,400	1,526	89,725	4,023,750	906,500	2,747,250
NON-TRAWL FISHERIES						
Pacific cod - Total	775					
January 1 - June 10	320					
June 10 - August 15	0					
August 15 - December 31	455					
Other non-trawl - Total	58					
May 1 - December 31	58					
Groundfish pot & jig	Exempt					
Sablefish hook-&-line	Exempt					
TOTAL NON-TRAWL	833					
PSQ RESERVE⁸	342	.....	7,275	326,250	73,500	222,750
GRAND TOTAL	4,575	1,526	97,000	4,350,000	980,000	2,970,000

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas.

² C. opilio Bycatch Limitation Zone. Boundaries are defined at 50 CFR part 679, fig. 13.

³ The Council at its December 2001 meeting limited red king crab for trawl fisheries within the RKCSS to 35 percent of the total allocation to the rock sole/flathead sole/ "other flatfish" fishery category (§ 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(B)). "Other flatfish" for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for Pacific halibut (a prohibited species), Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, arrowtooth flounder.

⁴ Greenland turbot, arrowtooth flounder, and sablefish fishery category.

⁵ The Council at its December 2001 meeting apportioned the rockfish PSC amounts from June 30 - December 31.

⁶ Pollock other than pelagic trawl pollock, Atka mackerel, and "other species" fishery category.

⁷ With the exception of the nontrawl Pacific cod directed fishery, any unused halibut PSC apportionment may be added to the following season's apportionment. Any unused halibut PSC apportioned to the nontrawl Pacific cod directed fishery during the January 1 through June 10 time period will not be available until after August 15.

⁸ With the exception of herring, 7.5 percent of each PSC limit is allocated to the multi-species CDQ program as PSQ reserve. The PSQ reserve is not allocated by fishery, gear or season.

Gulf of Alaska
2002 Specifications and Recommendations for Final 2003 Specifications (mt)

SPECIES	Area	2002					2003			
		Biomass	OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch*	Biomass	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock ¹	W (61)			17,730	17,730	17,381			16,788	16,788
	C (62)			23,045	23,045	20,380			19,685	19,685
	C (63)			9,850	9,850	10,809			10,339	10,339
	WYAK	726,600	75,480	1,165	1,165	1,818	670,410	69,410	1,078	1,078
	EYAK/SEO	28,710	8,610	6,460	6,460	2	28,710	8,610	6,460	6,460
	TOTAL	755,310	84,090	58,250	58,250	50,390	699,120	78,020	54,350	54,350
Pacific Cod	W			22,465	16,849	15,327			20,600	15,450
	C			31,680	24,790	25,094			29,000	22,690
	E			3,455	2,591	103			3,200	2,400
	TOTAL	428,000	72,100	57,600	44,230	40,524	452,000	70,100	52,800	40,540
Deep water flatfish	W			180	180	19			180	180
	C			2,220	2,220	530			2,220	2,220
	WYAK			1,330	1,330	2			1,330	1,330
	EYAK/SEO			1,150	1,150	7			1,150	1,150
	TOTAL	68,263	6,430	4,880	4,880	558	68,260	6,430	4,880	4,880
Rex sole	W			1,280	1,280	398			1,280	1,280
	C			5,540	5,540	2,611			5,540	5,540
	WYAK			1,600	1,600	0			1,600	1,600
	EYAK/SEO			1,050	1,050	0			1,050	1,050
	TOTAL	71,326	12,320	9,470	9,470	3,009	71,330	12,320	9,470	9,470
Shallow water flatfish	W			23,550	4,500	241			23,480	4,500
	C			23,080	13,000	6,599			21,740	13,000
	WYAK			1,180	1,180	2			1,160	1,160
	EYAK/SEO			1,740	1,740	0			2,960	2,960
	TOTAL	349,992	61,810	49,550	20,420	6,842	349,990	61,810	49,340	21,620
Flathead sole	W			9,000	2,000	419			16,420	2,000
	C			11,410	5,000	1,689			20,820	5,000
	WYAK			1,590	1,590	0			2,900	2,900
	EYAK/SEO			690	690	0			1,250	1,250
	TOTAL	170,915	29,530	22,690	9,280	2,108	132,260	51,560	41,390	11,150
Arrowtooth flounder	W			16,960	8,000	6,100			17,990	8,000
	C			106,580	25,000	14,674			113,050	25,000
	WYAK			17,150	2,500	56			18,190	2,500
	EYAK/SEO			5,570	2,500	111			5,910	2,500
	TOTAL	1,760,000	171,060	146,260	38,000	20,941	1,302,000	181,390	155,140	38,000
Sablefish	W			2,240	2,240	1,780			2,570	2,570
	C			5,430	5,430	6,120			6,440	6,440
	WYAK			1,940	1,940	1,548			2,320	2,320
	SEO			3,210	3,210	2,798			3,560	3,560
	TOTAL	188,000	19,350	12,820	12,820	12,246	182,000	20,020	14,890	14,890
Other Slope rockfish	W			90	90	222			90	90
	C			550	550	481			550	550
	WYAK			260	150	37			270	150
	EYAK/SEO			4,140	200	31			4,140	200
	TOTAL	107,960	6,610	5,040	990	771	107,960	6,610	5,050	990

PLAN TEAM, SSC AND AP RECOMMENDATIONS

REVISED DRAFT

SPECIES	Area	2002					2003			
		Biomass	OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch	Biomass	OFL	SSC ABC	AP TAC
Northern rockfish	W			810	810	337			890	890
	C			4,170	4,170	2,998			4,640	4,640
	E			0 ⁴	0 ⁴	NA			0 ⁴	0 ⁴
	TOTAL	94,350	5,910	4,980	4,980	3,335	108,830	6,560	5,530	5,530
Pacific ocean per	W		3,110	2,610	2,610	2,723		3,220	2,700	2,700
	C		9,760	8,220	8,220	8,263		10,120	8,510	8,510
	WYAK			780	780	748			810	810
	SEO		2,800	1,580	1,580	1		2,900	1,640	1,640
	TOTAL	293,240	15,670	13,190	13,190	11,735	298,820	16,240	13,660	13,660
Shortraker/rough	W			220	220	260			220	220
	C			840	840	628			840	840
	E			560	560	403			560	560
	TOTAL	70,890	2,340	1,620	1,620	1,291	66,830	2,340	1,620	1,620
Pelagic shelf rock	W			510	510	183			510	510
	C			3,480	3,480	2,680			3,480	3,480
	WYAK			640	640	448			640	640
	EYAK/SEO			860	860	7			860	860
	TOTAL	62,489	8,220	5,490	5,490	3,318	62,500	8,220	5,490	5,490
Demersal Shelf Rockfish		15,615	480	350	350	182	17,510	540	390	390
Atka Mackerel	GW	unknown	6,200	600	600	84	unknown	6,200	600	600
Thornyhead rockf	W			360	360	368			360	360
	C			840	840	504			840	840
	E			790	790	253			800	800
	TOTAL	77,840	2,330	1,990	1,990	1,125	85,760	3,050	2,000	2,000
Other Species	GW		NA	NA	11,330	3,748	NA	NA	NA	11,260
GOA TOTAL		4,514,190	504,450	394,780	237,890	162,207	4,005,170	531,410	416,600	236,440

* Catch through 11/02/02

1/ The pollock ABC has been reduced by 1,700 mt to accommodate the expected Prince William Sound State harvest.

2/ Deep water flatfish includes dover sole, Greenland turbot and deepsea sole.

3/ "Shallow water flatfish" includes rock sole, yellowfin sole, butter sole, starry flounder, English sole, Alaska plaice, and sand sole.

4/ The EGOA ABC for northern rockfish has been included in the WYAK ABC for other slope rockfish.

NOTE:

W = Western Gulf C = Central Gulf E = Eastern Gulf WYAK = West Yakutat EYAK/SEO = East Yakutat/Southeast
 GW means Gulfwide.

Prohibited Species Catch Limits

2002 Trawl		2002 Hook and Line		
Jan 1 - Apr 1	550 mt	1st trimester	Jan 1 - Jun 10	250 mt
Apr 1 - Jun 29	400 mt	2nd trimester	Jun 10 - Sep 1	5 mt
Jun 29 - Sep 1	600 mt	3rd trimester	Sept 1 - Dec 31	35 mt
Sept 1 - Oct 1	150 mt			
Oct 1 - Dec 31	300 mt	DSR	Jan 1 - Dec 31	10 mt
<hr/>		<hr/>		
TOTAL	2,000 mt			300 mt

Trawl fishery categories			
Season	Shallow Water	Deep Water	Total
Jan 1 - Apr 1	450 mt	100 mt	550 mt
Apr 1 - Jun 29	100 mt	300 mt	400 mt
Jun 29 - Sep 1	200 mt	400 mt	600 mt
Sept 1 - Oct 1	150 mt	any rollover	150 mt
Oct 1 - Dec 31	no apportionment		300 mt
TOTAL	900 mt	800 mt	2,000 mt

Longline C/P Elements and Options

General: Revise present Alternative 2. Add a new Alternative 6 for p-cod only in the WGOA. Other species to be kept at bycatch status. This proposal is a two-step process of a LLP based gear sector split followed by additional rationalization through cooperative formation based on catch history:

(1) Preliminary Action: Gear sector apportionment of p-cod (CP trawl, CV trawl, CP pot, CV pot, CP H&L, CV H&L, and jig (including inshore/ offshore) based on historical catch by sector (similar to BSAI Amendment 46/64 with the addition of inshore/offshore). Apportionment of PSC to each sector. Rollover provisions for unused TAC between sectors.

(2.) Rationalization Action: Preferred alternative is cooperative formation based on catch history. Establish cooperatives for directed cod CP H&L inshore and CP H&L offshore sectors with associated halibut PSC. Ability to coop on bycatch and bycatch reduction.

Amended Alternative 2: LLP Revision: Alternative 2 should be expanded to parallel what Amendment 46/64/67 accomplished in the BSAI in the cod fixed gear fisheries. Suggest additional gear splits (as in Element 1 below) along with inshore/offshore designations for p-cod fisheries. Add to qualifying years: 99-02.

New Alternative 6: For H&L CPs: Revise LLP program with cooperative formation.

Element 1: Gear Sector Designation: Establish H&L CP as a distinct gear sector under LLP. (H&L CP, H&L CV, pot CP, pot CV, trawl CP, trawl CV, jig, etc.).

Element 2: Area: WGOA & CGOA

Element 3: Target Species: P-cod only (directed fishing only). Non-target species to be retained at MRB status. P-cod remains at bycatch status in other longline fisheries not targeting p-cod (IFQ).

Element 4: Underutilized Species: H&L CPs should have access to underutilized species (such as arrowtooth) even if they do not have catch history for these species.

Element 5: Cod Apportionment Between Gear Sectors Including Inshore/Offshore Designations: Cod apportionment based on gear sector historical harvest including inshore/offshore designation. Separate apportionment in each appropriate gear sector for inshore/offshore catch history (example: H&L CP inshore and H&L CP offshore). Cod apportionment among gear sectors based on sector history averaged over the following years and converted to percent:

a.) 99-02

b.) 98-02

Suboption: Drop one year

Element 6: Rollovers: Establish rollover provisions for unused TAC between sectors.

Element 7: Apportionment of PSC to gear sector. Associated PSC apportioned between gear sectors (including inshore/offshore components of gear sector). Apportionment of PSC halibut would be based on amount of apportioned cod or historical PSC taken.

Element 8: Qualifying years within CP H&L sector: Must have a landing in the following time period:

- a.) the four years immediately preceding year of Council final action (unknown).
- b.) 99-02
- c.) 98-02

Element 9: Cooperative Formation: Based on catch history in the qualifying years. No minimal landing requirement. Each vessel brings its catch history into the coop no matter how small. Separate coops for directed cod CP H&L inshore and offshore, each with associated PSC. Ability to coop directed harvest as well PSC and bycatch. Ability to cooperate in bycatch reduction. Vessel catch history based on either:

- a.) Four years immediately preceding Council final action (unknown)
 - i.) Suboption: drop 1 year
- b.) 99-02 average
 - i.) Suboption: drop 1 year
- c.) 98-02 average
 - i.) Suboption: drop 1 year

Element 10: Transferability

C/P QS should be issued as a discrete class of QS.

CV and C/P QS should be transferable between sectors

Proposed exclusion of 2000 Pacific cod catch history should apply only to pot gear.

Element 11: Community Considerations

There should not be an apportionment from the C/P sector for community considerations

Trawl C/P Elements and Options

I. Qualification

All trawl catcher processors with valid LLP licenses and GOA trawl endorsements are eligible to receive an allocation of their catch history.

Option: Require participation in GOA trawl fisheries during or later than 1999.

II. Allocation of Catch History

A. Qualifying years

1995 to most recent year prior to implementation

Option 1: Drop one year

Option 2: Drop two years

Must have made landings in the Gulf, in any year, 1999 – 2002

B. Catch history

Catcher/processor history is based on retained catch for the qualifying years.

Shoreside catcher vessel history is based on delivered catch for the qualifying years.

1995 – 2002

Option 1: Drop one year

Option 2: Drop two years

All options include 2000 cod

C. Sector allocations

1. Pacific Cod: TAC is divided by existing regulation (90% shoreside, 10% offshore)

2. Target Rockfish: TAC is divided between all sectors based on historic catch by sector for the qualifying years.

3. Flatfish: Shoreside catcher vessels and offshore catcher/processors are assigned quota based on 125% of the sector percentage of the TAC for the qualifying years. The remainder of the TAC is available as an open access fishery for qualified GOA vessels. No PSC is allocated for the open access fishery. If an IPQ system is adopted, the open-access portion of the fishery will include open-access processing.³ *Flatfish, cont'd*

Option 1: Community programs such as CIFTs or GDAs

will be accommodated using unallocated TAC.

Option 2: Any unused portion of the allocated TAC will be released to the open access fishery on a date designed to be early enough for these fish to be available to the open access fishery. The release will be only for that year, and will revert back to the allocated quota the following year.

4. Sablefish: TAC is divided between fixed gear and trawl by area, as specified in Amendment 14. The trawl portion is further divided between shoreside and offshore based on the historic catch by sector for the qualifying years.
5. Halibut: PSC is allocated to trawl and fixed gear sectors as per existing regulations (2000 mt to trawl, 300 mt to fixed gear). The trawl halibut mortality cap is further divided between shoreside and offshore pro-rata to catch history by sector for the qualifying years.
6. IPQs: If a 'two-pie' system is adopted, the catcher/processor sector will receive processing shares commensurate with their harvest shares.
7. C/P shares are issued as a distinct class of shares.

D. Vessel allocations

Option 1: Divide the sector allocations into vessel shares in the following categories:

1. Target species (allocated by historic catch for the qualifying years).
 - a. Pacific Cod
 - b. Target Rockfish (POP, Northern, Pelagic Slope)
 - c. Flatfish
 - d. Sablefish
2. Target Species (allocated by historic catch for the qualifying years)

Pacific cod (retain 90/10 inshore/offshore split)
Deep water flatfish
Arrowtooth flounder
Rex sole
Shallow water flatfish
Flathead sole
Northern rockfish
Pacific Ocean Perch
Pelagic rockfish
Sablefish (retain Amendment 14 allocation to trawl)

2. Bycatch Species

a. 'Other Rockfish' in the Western Gulf will not be allocated, but will be managed by MRB and will go to PSC status when the TAC is reached.

b. Thornyhead, Shortraker/Rougheye, Atka mackerel, CGOA 'other rockfish'.

Option 1: Manage these bycatch species as an open-access fishery with MRBs, as is currently done. If the TAC is reached, these species become prohibited and must be discarded. If there is danger of hitting the OFL, the MRB percent will be adjusted downward accordingly.

Option 2: Allocate these bycatch species to entities or coops based on MRB rates needed to achieve full utilization of the TAC.

Option 3: Allocate bycatch species to entities or coops based on historic catch, with species going on PSC status for that group when their allocation is taken.

Option 4: if ABC/TAC of atka mackerel increases enough to accommodate a target fishery, atka mackerel becomes allocated as a target species and assigned to open access.

3. Halibut PSC

Option 1: Halibut PSC is allocated to each vessel pro-rata based on their catch history allocation.

Option 2: allocate as percentage of catch history (e.g. if total catch history is 50% of trawl total catch, then 50% of halibut is issued)(to individual or coop)

Option 2: Do not assign individual vessel shares to the catcher/processor sector. Allow this sector to form voluntary cooperatives which will be assigned a portion of the sector allocations and PSC equivalent to their aggregate catch history. Allocations to individual vessels will be managed by the coop, outside of the Council process. Bycatch species will be managed as outlined in part two of option one, above.

Option 3: Allocations will be made for halibut only (you get your allocation of halibut based on your retained catch history, however your retained catch history is not allocated. You get halibut and can fish for whatever species you want. Same as current system but with individual/coop level PSC accountability)

- a. Individual vessel basis
- b. Coop basis

E. Regionalization

Catcher/Processor quota share will have no regional designation.

F. Owner-on-board requirements

There is no owner-on-board requirement for the Catcher/Processor sector.

III. Ownership/transferability of Quota Share

- A. Quota allocations are freely transferable between sectors and gear types, except that the catcher/processor sector may not purchase quota allocations from the shoreside sector.
- B. Allocations are divisible, allowing sale or lease of the entire allocation or portions thereof.
- C. C/P sector can lease or buy quota from the CV sector.
- D. C/P sector can process CV fish.
- E. Assignment and /or ownership of quota share will go to the entity owning the License Limitation Permit.
- F. C/P shares are issued as a distinct class of shares.

III. Ownership/transferability of Quota Share, cont'd

- C. There are no ownership, harvest or use caps for the catcher/processor sector.

IV. Community protection

- A. Community development/protection programs such as CIFTs or GDAs will be accommodated using unallocated TAC from underutilized fisheries.
- B. Communities are allowed and encouraged to purchase quota allocations from either shoreside or at-sea fishery participants (under the one-directional allocational transfer from CP to shoreside), to invest in the catcher vessel and shoreside processing industry to encourage development of the portion of underutilized TACs reserved for open access.
- C. The offshore cod TAC and the remaining CP quotas should not have further deductions for community or entry-level fishery set asides. Instead, a portion of the unallocated under-utilized species TAC may be set aside for these purposes, however, the set aside will not be implemented if it requires a reduction in any allocated bycatch species to any sector.

V. Sideboards

- A. Participants in GOA rationalized fisheries are limited to their historical participation in BSAI fisheries.
- B. The Council is strongly encouraged to rationalize all fisheries in the BSAI and GOA simultaneously to eliminate the need for sideboards.

Fishermen's Finest CP Trawl Proposal for Gulf Rationalization

1. LLP Qualification and Recency:

Must have valid LLP license and Gulf trawl endorsements
Must have made landings in the Gulf, in any year, 1999 - 2002

2. Catch History Qualifying Period:

1995 – 2002
Option 1: Drop one year
Option 2: Drop two years

All options include 2000 cod

3. Qualifying Landing Criteria:

Landings based on retained catch of fully-utilized species
Option 1: catch history determined based on a percentage of total retained catch per year, as function of TAC
Option 2: catch history determined on the poundage of retained catch

Landings based on retained catch of under-subscribed species
Option 1: catch history determined based on 125 percent of total retained catch per year, as function of TAC
Option 2: catch history determined on the 125 percent of the poundage of retained catch

4. Allocated Target Species:

Pacific cod (retain 90/10 inshore/offshore split)
Deep water flatfish
Arrowtooth flounder
Rex sole
Shallow water flatfish
Flathead sole
Northern rockfish
Pacific Ocean Perch
Pelagic rockfish
Sablefish (retain Amendment 14 allocation to trawl)

5. Bycatch Species:

Thornyhead, Other rockfish, Shortraker/Rougheye, atka mackerel, slope rockfish

Option 1: treat as MRB

Option 2: allocate based on catch history, with the exception of WGOA

Other rockfish, which remains managed as MRB species.

Option 3: if ABC/TAC of atka mackerel increases enough to accommodate a target fishery, atka mackerel becomes allocated as a target species and assigned to open access.

6. PSC Species:

Halibut

Retain trawl/fixed gear apportionments

Option 1: allocate as percentage of catch history (e.g. if total catch history is 50% of trawl total catch, then 50% of halibut is issued)(to individual or coop)

Option 2: allocate by rate by fishery (to individual vessel or coop)

7. Allocation Assignment:

Option 1: Allocations will be made for halibut only (you get your allocation of halibut based on your retained catch history, however your retained catch history is not allocated. You get halibut and can fish for whatever species you want. Same as current system but with individual/coop level PSC accountability)

a. Individual vessel basis

b. Coop basis

Option 2: Allocations will be made at the individual vessel level (#4,5,6 species)

Option 3: Allocations will be made to a coop (#4,5,6 species)

8. Vessel Categories:

There will be no vessel categories in the CP sector. However, the pacific cod allocation will remain apportioned 90% inshore and 10% offshore. A CP vessel allocation will be based on its vessel designation, so that if it is an inshore vessel, the cod allocation is taken from the inshore cod apportionment.

9. Ownership, harvest, use caps:

There will be no ownership, harvest or use caps in the CP sector.

10. Owner on Board provisions:

There will be no owner on board provision in the CP sector.

11. Ownership/Transferability:

C/P shares are issued as a distinct class of shares.

C/P sector can lease or sell its quota, in part or in whole, to either CP or CV sector, except that the CPs have purchasing first right of refusal, thereby preserving historic participation and investment in CP sector. (Same rule applies to CV quota share.)

C/P sector can lease or buy quota from the CV sector.

C/P sector can process CV fish.

Assignment and /or ownership of quota share will go to the entity owning the License Limitation Permit.

12. Regionalization:

CP sector will have no regionalization.

13. Community Protections:

The offshore CP sector, both trawl and fixed gear, saw a reduction in the cod quota to 10% in 1993. The designation of 90% of the cod quota provides great value and benefit to the inshore harvesting and processing communities, and fully serves the intent of community protections.

For this reason, the offshore cod TAC and the remaining CP quotas should not have further deductions for community or entry-level fishery set asides. Instead, a portion of the unallocated under-utilized species TAC may be set aside for these purposes, however, the set aside will not be implemented if it requires a reduction in any allocated bycatch species to any sector.

Consideration: Allocations are made based on retained species only. This does not take into consideration bycatch that is required to catch the target, but has been discarded. When apportioning an allocation that is based on retained catch only, the recipient will lose that bycatch history which is essential to prosecuting the full target fishery amount. For example, once the allocation is made, the recipient will have to decide whether to use flatfish allocation as bycatch for the directed cod fishery, or cod bycatch for the directed flatfish fishery. The allocations issued will not have enough flatfish to prosecute fully both target fisheries because of discarded bycatch. At least there is a buffer with flatfish species where catch and TAC are less than ABC. For other bycatch species which have been discarded, and for which the TAC is taken each year, the situation is worse, as one cannot get whole without discard history. (Many discards are regulatory.)

How this relates to the community set aside, or to an entry level fishery, is that to award a target fishery requires awarding bycatch with which to prosecute it. Already, fishers are

not whole because discarded bycatch cannot be taken into account and allocated. In order to successfully fish to the community set aside, there must be bycatch. The quota share holders will take a further reduction in their initial bycatch allocation in order to fund the community set aside. This will hurt all fishers by hampering their ability even further to prosecute their target fisheries.

It is imperative that any set aside recommendation be analyzed to determine the amount of bycatch species that will be required. If initial allocation, of any species, to quota share holders must be reduced in order to accommodate the set aside or entry level fisheries, then there should be no set asides. The set aside would harm the CV and CP sectors by taking fish and not allowing them to prosecute their targets with the necessary bycatch. This would be economically harmful and investments in the Gulf fisheries would be eroded since fisheries could not longer be prosecuted at historic levels.

Because of history with CDQ fisheries in the Bering Sea where each species has been allocated to a user group, and with the AFA example of sideboard catch history, Fishermen's Finest is very concerned with the allocation that will result from retained catch only and the ability of all fishers to harvest at their historical levels. Coops can alleviate this concern provided that some coop participants do not fish and free up extra bycatch to the group.

Fishermen's Finest's preferred alternative would be a PSC-only based coop, without quota shares allocated. This allows for an open access fishery where each vessel is accountable for its halibut rates, and bycatch species do not become limiting.

Groundfish Forum Proposal for GOA Rationalization

October 31, 2002

The trawl catcher/processor fleet has significant and historic involvement in GOA fisheries. It is a unique sector of the industry, depending on flexibility of catch and fishing areas to operate effectively. The intent of this proposal is to preserve and improve the economics of the catcher/processor sector, in conjunction with the improvements available to the shoreside sector under GOA rationalization.

Economic performance in the at-sea sector has been eroded by overcapitalization and the open-access race for fish. Our goal is to create the opportunity for more efficient operations through the formation of cooperative catching/processing organizations. This proposal will also provide new opportunities for all entities in the Gulf of Alaska by providing access to quota and to new markets for underutilized species.

Basic Principles:

This proposal is based on allocation of catch history to fishery participants, either through allocations of relevant sector percentages and formation of voluntary coops or through allocation at the individual vessel level. We believe that this is the only way to effectively enable fishing cooperatives for our sector, thus reducing the race for fish in the GOA. Changes to the license limitation program will change the number of participants, but will not address basic incentives for overcapitalization. Our intent is to provide the circumstances by which vessels can fish most efficiently, minimize bycatch, and maintain the flexibility to respond to other concerns such as environmental issues and market demands. Latent license concerns may be addressed by requiring recent participation to qualify for a catch history allocation.

A basic assumption of this proposal is that cooperatives may be formed within and between vessels and sectors as market forces dictate. NMFS may require proof of contracts to assure that cooperatives have mechanisms in place to keep members within the overall coop allocations. NMFS will also work with coops to determine the amount of observer coverage necessary to maintain an appropriate level of information gathering.

Because the requirements of shoreside vessels and processors differ from those for offshore vessels, this proposal does not directly address issues surrounding allocations specific to shoreside processing entities such as Individual Processing Quotas. Similarly, issues specific to shoreside harvesting entities (such as owner-on-board provisions) are not applied to the offshore catcher/processor sector.

Community protection programs such as CIFTs and GDAs present creative ideas for assuring the continuation of shoreside participation. We encourage further analysis of these programs to determine their potential for addressing the problem statement and their compliance with National Standards and other legal constraints.

This proposal includes suggestions for providing community programs priority access to some fisheries. It also supports communities by specifying that quota shares can only move from the offshore sector to the onshore sector, not vice versa. By further agreeing to base catch history on retained catch, the offshore sector (which does not have access to meal plants) has assured that the shoreside sector will have a significant advantage in the allocation process.

Underutilized Species:

One of the key elements of this proposal is the system for allocating flatfish, for which the TAC is not currently being fully harvested. Our purpose is to reward historic participation in these fisheries, while still allowing for new entrants where possible. The program is designed to encourage formation of coops, minimize the race for fish, and provide the flexibility to accommodate community-based programs using unallocated TAC.

Under our plan, historic participants are awarded 125% of their catch history, to create the incentive and opportunity to use their existing PSC more carefully so as to have the opportunity to harvest additional quantities of target species. This also provides an incentive to form coops to maximize the benefit of the allocation. In most cases this will leave half or more of the TAC available for an 'open access' fishery. Since TACs are set well below ABCs for most of these species, there is considerable room for growth in these fisheries.

Community protection programs such as CIFTs or GDAs would be accommodated within this unallocated portion of the TAC. Using this approach, communities have the ability to develop new ventures without the conflicts that result from pre-empting existing fisheries.

GFF Trawl Catcher/Processor Proposal for Rationalization of the Gulf of Alaska Trawl Fisheries

I. Qualification

All trawl catcher processors with valid LLP licenses and GOA trawl endorsements are eligible to receive an allocation of their catch history.

Option: Require participation in GOA trawl fisheries during or later than 1999.

II. Allocation of Catch History

A. Qualifying years

1995 to most recent year prior to implementation

Option 1: Drop one year

Option 2: Drop two years

B. Catch history

Catcher/processor history is based on retained catch for the qualifying years.

Shoreside catcher vessel history is based on delivered catch for the qualifying years.

C. Sector allocations

1. Pacific Cod: TAC is divided by existing regulation (90% shoreside, 10% offshore). The offshore portion is further divided between trawl and fixed gear based on the historic catch by sector for the qualifying years. The allocation for each participant will come from the sector (inshore or offshore) where the history was earned.
2. Target Rockfish: TAC is divided between all sectors based on historic catch by sector for the qualifying years.
3. Flatfish: Shoreside catcher vessels and offshore catcher/processors are assigned quota based on 125% of the sector percentage of the TAC for the qualifying years. The remainder of the TAC is available as an open access fishery for qualified GOA vessels. No PSC is allocated for the open access fishery. If an IPQ system is adopted, the open-access portion of the fishery will include open-access processing.

3. Flatfish, cont'd

Option 1: Community programs such as CIFTs or GDAs will be accommodated using unallocated TAC.

Option 2: Any unused portion of the allocated TAC will be released to the open access fishery on a date designed to be early enough for these fish to be available to the open access fishery. The release will be only for that year, and will revert back to the allocated quota the following year.

4. Sablefish: TAC is divided between fixed gear and trawl by area, as specified in Amendment 14. The trawl portion is further divided between shoreside and offshore based on the historic catch by sector for the qualifying years.
5. Halibut: PSC is allocated to trawl and fixed gear sectors as per existing regulations (2000 mt to trawl, 300 mt to fixed gear). The trawl halibut mortality cap is further divided between shoreside and offshore pro-rata to catch history by sector for the qualifying years.
6. IPQs: If a 'two-pie' system is adopted, the catcher/processor sector will receive processing shares commensurate with their harvest shares.

D. Vessel allocations

Option 1: Divide the sector allocations into vessel shares in the following categories:

1. Target species (allocated by historic catch for the qualifying years).
 - a. Pacific Cod
 - b. Target Rockfish (POP, Northern, Pelagic Slope)
 - c. Flatfish
 - d. Sablefish
2. Bycatch Species
 - a. 'Other Rockfish' in the Western Gulf will not be allocated, but will be managed by MRB and will go to PSC status when the TAC is reached.

2. *Bycatch Species, cont'd*

b. Thornyhead, Shortraker/Rougheye, Atka mackerel, CGOA 'other rockfish'.

Option 1: Manage these bycatch species as an open-access fishery with MRBs, as is currently done. If the TAC is reached, these species become prohibited and must be discarded. If there is danger of hitting the OFL, the MRB percent will be adjusted downward accordingly.

Option 2: Allocate these bycatch species to entities or coops based on MRB rates needed to achieve full utilization of the TAC.

Option 3: Allocate bycatch species to entities or coops based on historic catch, with species going on PSC status for that group when their allocation is taken.

3. Halibut PSC

Halibut PSC is allocated to each vessel pro-rata based on their catch history allocation.

Option 2: Do not assign individual vessel shares to the catcher/processor sector. Allow this sector to form voluntary cooperatives which will be assigned a portion of the sector allocations and PSC equivalent to their aggregate catch history. Allocations to individual vessels will be managed by the coop, outside of the Council process. Bycatch species will be managed as outlined in part two of option one, above.

E. Regionalization

Catcher/Processor quota share will have no regional designation.

F. Owner-on-board requirements

There is no owner-on-board requirement for the Catcher/Processor sector.

III. Ownership/transferability of Quota Share

A. Quota allocations are freely transferable between sectors and gear types, except that the catcher/processor sector may not purchase quota allocations from the shoreside sector.

B. Allocations are divisible, allowing sale or lease of the entire allocation or portions thereof.

III. Ownership/transferability of Quota Share, cont'd

- C. There are no ownership, harvest or use caps for the catcher/processor sector.

IV. Community protection

- A. Community development/protection programs such as CIFTs or GDAs will be accommodated using unallocated TAC from underutilized fisheries.
- B. Communities are allowed and encouraged to purchase quota allocations from either shoreside or at-sea fishery participants (under the one-directional allocational transfer from CP to shoreside), to invest in the catcher vessel and shoreside processing industry to encourage development of the portion of underutilized TACs reserved for open access.

V. Sideboards

- A. Participants in GOA rationalized fisheries are limited to their historical participation in BSAI fisheries.