

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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December 3, 1999

DRAFT AGENDA
141st Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
December 8-13, 1999
Hilton Hotel
Anchorage, Alaska

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will meet December 8-13, 1999, beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the 8th, at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska. Other meetings to be held during the week are:

Committee/Panel

Advisory Panel
Scientific and Statistical Committee
Enforcement Committee
NMFS Adaptive Management Strategies
Workshop
Ecosystems Committee

Beginning

~8:00 am, Mon., Dec. 6
8:00 am, Mon., Dec. 6
6:00 pm, Tue., Dec. 7 (Location TBA)

7:00pm, Thur., Dec. 9 (King Salmon/Liamna Room)
After Council recesses, Fri., Dec. 10
(Location TBA)

All meetings will be held at the hotel and are open to the public except Council executive sessions. 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. Any written comments and materials to be included in Council meeting materials must be received at the Council office **by 5:00 p.m. (AK DST) on Wednesday, December 1, 1999.** 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. **Material received after the deadline will not be included in notebooks for this meeting. 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 18 copies is needed to ensure that Council members, the executive director, NOAA General Counsel and the official meeting record each receive a copy. If copies are to be made available for the Advisory Panel (23), Scientific and Statistical Committee (13), staff (10) or the public (50) after the pre-meeting deadline, they must also be provided by the submitter.

FOR THOSE WISHING TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE ADVISORY PANEL

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

FOR THOSE WISHING TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE

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

COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

ABC	Acceptable Biological Catch	MSFCMA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
AP	Advisory Panel	MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act
ADF&G	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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	<u>Estimated Hours</u>
A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER	
(a) Approval of Agenda	•
B. REPORTS	
B-1 Executive Director's Report	•
B-2 State Fisheries Report by ADF&G	•
B-3 NMFS Management Report	•
B-4 Enforcement and Surveillance Reports	•
	(2 hours for A/B items)
C. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS	
C-1 <u>American Fisheries Act</u>	(6 hours)
(a) Review Co-op performance report and agreements.	
(b) Comment on proposed rule for 2000, particularly with regard to vessel exemptions.	
(c) Update on analysis of excessive shares/processing sideboards.	
C-2 <u>Essential Fish Habitat</u>	(2 hours)
Comment on interim final rule.	
C-3 <u>Halibut Charter GHL</u>	(12 hours)
(a) Staff report, including Board of Fisheries comments.	
(b) Initial review.	
C-4 <u>Steller Sea Lions</u>	(3 hours)
(a) Status report on litigation.	
(b) Comment on proposed rule for 2000.	
(c) Discuss adaptive management strategies and results of evening workshop.	

- C-5 Pacific Cod LLP Endorsements (1 hour)
Discussion paper on grandfather provisions and progress on analysis.
- C-6 Groundfish SEIS (2 hours)
Status report and comment on Notice of Intent.
- C-7 Halibut Subsistence (1 hour)
 - (a) Staff report, including Board of Fisheries comments.
 - (b) Review alternatives and analysis and give direction to staff.
- C-8 Alaska Board of Fisheries (1 hour)
 - (a) Summary of October work session.
 - (b) Review Board proposals of mutual concern.

D. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

- D-1 Final Groundfish Specifications for 2000 (8 hours)
 - (a) Approve final EA/BSAI SAFE.
 - (b) Approve final 2000 BSAI groundfish and PSC apportionments.
 - (c) Approve final EA/GOA SAFE.
 - (d) Approve final GOA groundfish and PSC apportionments.
 - (e) Approve assumed halibut discard mortality rates.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

F. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Total Agenda Hours: 38

TIME SUMMARY

Total agenda hours	38.0 hours
Lunches - 6. days (1 hr ea)	6.0 hours
Breaks (3/day, 15 min ea x 6 days)	<u>4.5 hours</u>
Total estimated hours required:	48.5 hours

Meeting as follows:

Wed. - Mon - 8am-5:30pm = 9.5 hours x 6 = 57.0 (Total number of hours available)

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Certified: Saul Bendyfer
Date: 11/23/99

MINUTES Scientific Statistical Committee October 11-13, 1999

The Scientific Statistical Committee met October 11-13, 1999 at the Doubletree Hotel in Seattle, Washington. All members were present except Richard Maras̄o and Steve Hare:

Jack Tagart, Vice Chair
Dan Kimura
Terry Quinn
Hal Weeks

Keith Criddle,
Doug Larson
Doug Eggers

Sue Hills
Seth Macinko
Al Tyler

C-2(d) Excessive Shares

The SSC received a report from Chris Oliver. Public testimony was received from John Gauvin (Groundfish Forum) and Earl Comstock (Fair Fisheries Coalition).

The discussion paper in the briefing book does a good job outlining the complexities and potential pitfalls this issue presents to the Council and analytical staff. The SSC commends the authors for their clear, concise narrative.

The SSC suggests that the Council carefully consider the proposed actions presented under items 3 and 4 on pages 10-11 of the discussion paper. At this point in time, the SSC suggests that the Council consider carefully whether it is reasonable to devote further staff time to analysis of this issue. As the discussion paper makes clear, defining numerical "excessive shares" caps will be extremely difficult if not impossible. Fundamental decisions on issues such as whether the excessive shares caps apply to all firms or only to AFA qualified firms must be made before further analytical work is pursued. Additionally, it seems prudent to wait until specific action on processing sideboards is identified because of the interrelationship between sideboards and excessive shares (as outlined in the discussion paper). Finally, the SSC believes that future consideration of this issue would benefit from more information on trends in markets as the post-AFA era unfolds. Industry adjustment to the many features of the AFA (and subsequent AFA-related Council actions) presents analysts with a moving target at the present time.

C-2(e) Inshore Catcher Vessel Cooperatives

The SSC heard a presentation from Robert Halvorsen and Fahad Khalil (University of Washington) of the "Discussion Paper on Inshore Sector Catcher Vessel Cooperatives in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Pollock Fisheries." Public testimony was provided by Levis Kochin (University of Washington for Trident Fisheries), Brent Paine (United Catcher Boats), Scott Matulich and Marat Sever (Washington State University), John Young and John Dooley (representing Independent Catcher Vessels Association), Joe Plesha (Trident Seafoods), Glen Merrill (Aleutians East Borough), Earl Comstock (Fair Fisheries Coalition), John Iani (Unisea), and Greg Baker (Westward Seafoods).

While the SSC believes the discussion paper is useful, we point out that the paper lacks much of the documentation normally contained in an EA/RIR/IRFA. The document should be fleshed out to include an introduction with a purpose, need for action, and explicit identification of alternatives. The usual NEPA discussion is needed. The discussion paper would fit into a portion of the RIR, but the RIR should include a broader discussion of why this analytic approach was selected in lieu of an assessment of the impact on net benefits to the nation, and the other socio-economic effects of the proposed alternatives.

The discussion paper is useful in that it makes clearly-stated assumptions, and uses bargaining theory to suggest the possible effects of the Dooley-Hall proposal and other cooperative provisions. The key assumptions are

- (a) the adoption of a "benchmark" against which proposed policies are measured;
- (b) that the degree of excess capacity in pollock processing is modest;
- (c) that processors will largely refrain from aggressive price competition;
- (d) that processors have greater knowledge about costs and demand, and control of a substantial number of catcher vessels, which results in bargaining advantages;
- (e) there is a substantial amount of "under-vested" fishing effort; i.e., boats whose qualifying catch history in 1995-97 is lower than their fishing power.

Given these assumptions, the paper states that

- (1) "there will be a significant probability that independent catcher vessels will be adversely affected by the AFA's provisions for cooperatives;"
- (2) "ICVs would be better off, and processors worse off, under the Dooley-Hall proposal than under the AFA;
- (3) adverse effects to processors under Dooley-Hall would be reduced by limiting increases in the share of deliveries by processing facilities or firms.
- (4) raising the limit on co-op deliveries to processors could reduce the likelihood of adverse effects on ICVs
- (5) eliminating the open-access year for ICVs to change processors could benefit ICVs, depending on how it is applied;
- (6) limiting increases in open-access catch by ICVs would tend to help fully-vested ICVs and hurt under-vested ICVs, while guaranteeing minimum shares of catch history in open access would do the opposite.

In evaluating the conclusions of the discussion paper, the key points to keep in mind are

- (a) the assumptions directly affect the conclusions drawn;
- (b) there is little quantitative evidence to either support or refute the assumptions;
- (c) there is considerable disagreement among knowledgeable people in the industry about the "truth" of the assumptions.

The SSC's comments are as follows.

Benchmark. The benchmark, or status quo, chosen for the analysis determines whether different firms are helped or hurt by specific provisions. The benchmark in the discussion paper is, "the AFA with all provisions in place except for cooperatives." An alternative benchmark could be employed to consider benefits and costs under the AFA as opposed to pre-AFA. While choice of a benchmark affects the statements about whether ICVs and processors gain or lose overall under specific provisions, it does not alter the statements about the general trends or directions of impact.

Excess Capacity in Processing. While many would agree that there is excess processing capacity, there is disagreement over whether the degree is "modest." No quantitative estimates of pollock processing capacity were presented to the SSC.

Price Competition by Processors. There is strong disagreement both among industry sources and academic commenters about how aggressive the price competition between processors will be under AFA coops. Those who feel there will be strong price competition point to the reductions in number of harvesting vessels and reductions in daily processing throughput in 1999 pollock operations as evidence. Those who feel there will not be strong price competition point to the high degree of concentration in processing and the long-run incentives to refrain from aggressive competition when there are only a few firms in an industry.

Bargaining advantages. There is substantial disagreement about the magnitude of any bargaining advantage. Those who feel processors have a large advantage point to the much greater complexity of processing operations, making knowledge of their cost structure to outsiders much more difficult to obtain; and to the high potential share of harvest and numbers of CVs "controlled" by processors (though "control" is difficult to define rigorously). Those who feel there is no large processor advantage point to processor practices of "opening their books," to IRS scrutiny of processor pricing practices, and to the ownership of offshore processing by CVs in nearly every processor coop.

Overall. The SSC feels that the discussion paper provides "reasoned speculation" about effects of coop provisions. It sheds light on key assumptions and resulting conclusions. Whether one agrees with the document's conclusions depends on whether one agrees with its assumptions. It is very difficult to corroborate the truth of the assumptions based on hard evidence. Reasonable people disagree strongly over the merits of the assumptions. The judgment call is, appropriately, the Council's to make. Since the SSC does not believe this is the last time the Council will evaluate cooperative management structures, the Council should consider putting in place mechanisms to collect the appropriate data on prices, and quantities, so that better information is available to evaluate proposed modifications to coop structures in the future.

C-2 (f) AFA Data Requirements

The SSC received a brief staff presentation on the status of efforts to coordinate State and Federal data reporting requirements for processors.

C-7 Groundfish SEIS

The SSC reviewed a copy of the SEIS Remand Order and oral presentation by NMFS Regional Staff. The presentation and discussion addressed the types of information that will be in the SEIS, the approximate schedule for its development, and the range of alternatives to be analyzed. Choice and wording of alternatives to be considered will be a critical element. The number of possible combinations of potential fishery management measures (e.g. harvest levels, seasons and areas of operations, allocation to gear types, etc) is infinite, but our ability to make analytic distinctions between many of these will be quite limited. The alternatives chosen need to cover a realistic range of biologic removals and human impacts to the ecosystem, but without mandating the analysis of minuscule distinctions.

C-9 Essential Fish Habitat

Dave Witherell (NPFMC) presented the staff report. The discussion paper addressing Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) represents the start of a second phase of the Council's efforts to identify, describe and protect essential fish habitats. The discussion paper puts forward an interesting mix of potential habitat types, specific areas, and possible management measures to be considered in this context.

The interim final rule (52FR 66531, December 19, 1998) says that potential HAPCs must meet one or more of the following criteria: (1) important ecological function, (2) sensitivity of the habitat to human-caused degradation, (3) vulnerability of the habitat type to development activities and (4) rarity of the habitat type. The areas put forward in the discussion paper were nominated based primarily on the latter three criteria. Our understanding of the ecological importance of particular habitat types or areas is generally quite limited. While this is a problem, it is also an opportunity for the Council's Ecosystem Committee and Plan Teams to focus on research and monitoring activities that would improve our understanding (see minutes for C-12, Ecosystem Management). Council support for these activities could help guide researchers and funding toward these questions.

As the analysis evolves, the SSC encourages the authors to attempt to define habitat types or areas as explicitly as possible to minimize the potential for mis-understanding.

C-12 Ecosystem Management

Dave Witherell (NPFMC) presented the staff report on this item which also included the Ecosystem Considerations chapter of the draft SAFE documents.

The Plan Team's and the Council's Ecosystem Committee continue to incorporate and present updated information and concerns relating to ecosystem structure and function.

As a complement to their commendable work in compiling and providing information, the SSC suggests that the Teams and Committee identify some of the priority research and monitoring needed to improve our understanding of cold marine ecosystems. For example, the Council's closure of most of Bristol Bay to bottom trawling to protect red king crab habitat logically suggests an evaluation of the efficacy of this measure specifically, and of natural change in shallow, untrawled areas more generally. Identification of priority research questions or topics could aid researchers forming research proposals.

In addition to questions of the "natural" ecosystem, the Plan Teams and the Ecosystem Committee also raise broader conceptual questions of the role of humans in the ecosystem. The priority placed by the Committee on reducing excess fishing capacity speaks to this question, and to the challenge of evaluating the condition of ecological systems that are influenced by human activity.

D-2 Preliminary Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) and Specifications

A. General Issues

Consistency in ABC Determinations

At the December 1998 SSC meeting, the SSC noted that ABC adjustments below the maximum permissible ABC level were adopted for several species and asked the Plan Teams whether a consistent policy could be developed for such adjustments. The Teams have carefully responded to the SSC in their minutes and itemized the concerns that led to these adjustments. The SSC is further pleased that the Teams will include a table in the SAFEs that show the adjustments. The SSC agrees with the Plan Teams that further exploration of the issue of consistency must await the outcome of the proposed plan amendment to redefine ABC and OFL.

Risk Assessment

The move by several analysts to use ADModel Builder is a welcome one, in that more formal risk assessments should be easier to carry out and present. The SSC is enthusiastic about this opportunity to present risk curves and decision tables and urges analysts and the Plan Teams to consider such approaches in their assessments.

EA/RIR

Tamra Faris (NMFS) outlined the new approach of presenting the EA/RIR for TAC-setting during the process rather than after. The idea is to look at the big picture of the overall impact of the TAC recommendations in a holistic way. The SSC is concerned that sufficient time will not be available to accomplish this meritorious objective in a useful way. The Plan Teams make their recommendations in late November and the EA/RIR will need to be ready just a few days later. This lack of time creates the possibility that inaccurate conclusions could be drawn and that excessive boilerplate material will be used. The SSC urges the preparers to be judicious in their choice of material, so that the EA/RIR will be useful.

The document will make its evaluation based on alternative F values ranging from that corresponding to the maximum permissible ABC to $F=0$. To provide balance in the consideration of fishing effects and to illustrate the conservation effects of actual recommendations, the authors should also consider at least one F value higher, such as F_{OFL} .

B. Bering Sea Aleutian Islands

The SSC reviewed a series of progress reports on the generation of groundfish ABCs. The ABCs from last year have been rolled over to start the year 2000 fisheries and by the December Council meeting, the new ABC estimates will be available.

The analysts are generally proceeding well with converting last years' Stock Synthesis age-structured models into the new ADModel Builder framework. The SSC is concerned with a systematic discrepancy between the

stock synthesis and ADModel Builder approaches in the estimation of recruit year-class strengths in the last few years for yellowfin sole, rocksole, and Alaska plaice. The SSC suggests that analysts carefully evaluate the convergence properties of their models. For example, they could conduct a sensitivity analysis. The analysts could use final estimates from its Stock Synthesis program as starting values in ADModel Builder to ascertain that the objective function is actually minimized.

Proposed changes to the Pacific cod model are discussed in the GOA minutes.

The SSC heard testimony from Paul Ison (skipper of the Unimak) that flatfish in the Bering Sea were more off-bottom than in previous years, coinciding with very low water temperature. The SSC notes that this observation may explain why the survey's biomass decreased this year.

The SSC continues to be interested in the overall sampling program that develops the data base used by assessment authors in the models to arrive at ABC estimates. In testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries, NPFMC Chairman Richard Lauber noted that the SSC initiated a "framework plan to evaluate and improve catch estimation," and "has developed a formal process to review annually the sampling methods and catch estimation procedures." The SSC recommends this process should next address the sampling scheme for Pacific cod in view of the complexities of the fishing gear types used in the cod fisheries, difficult age determinations, and the complex distribution of cod on the grounds.

In particular the SSC suggests planning an analysis of the Pacific cod length-frequency samples used in the catch-at-age calculations. Age compositions of the catches are determined through the length-frequency samples and as a consequence, the catch-age modeling is strongly influenced by that sampling program. The sampling might be examined with respect to a number of factors, in particular the influence of sample size, stratification by fleet sector (gear), time of year and fishing location (statistical area). The sizes of samples and the distributions of the samples through the data stratifications influence the values produced by the assessment model. Several outstanding questions need to be addressed: Is the sampling program adequate? If more fish cannot be measured, should more but smaller samples be taken? Does the spread of samples among the gear-month-area strata lead to biasing the results of the model? What distinctions between the GOA and BSAI suggest different sampling needs for the two areas? How are State of Alaska samples in the GOA entered into the model?

A review of cod sampling procedures by observers needs to be conducted first. This would be a performance audit describing the current sampling protocols and how well the samples have met these protocols. In addition, a description of how the "blend system" works in relation to Pacific cod catches would be desirable. This overview would require coordination with personnel from AFSC, the Observer Program and the NMFS Regional office. The SSC recommends planning the first review at its February 2000 meeting, but recognizes the need to coordinate scheduling and staff limitations with NMFS.

In the second stage of this analysis, the SSC recommends that the analysts and Plan Team explore the impacts of the sampling program and resulting data base on ABC estimates made by the current model. The SSC notes that the Observer Program has contracted for review of the Observer Program and its sampling design. After these reviews are completed, more progress on this second stage is anticipated.

C. Gulf of Alaska

Walleye Pollock

The boundary of the area covered by the stock assessment model was moved eastward to 140° W. to coincide with the area open to trawling in the Gulf of Alaska. This results in a cleaner assessment because now all of area 640 is covered by the model. Previously, area 640 survey and fishery catches had to be split.

The SSC recommends that the ADF&G Prince William Sound biomass estimate be added to the NMFS survey as a first step in incorporating the Prince William Sound population into the GOA stock assessment. Although there are survey gear differences, the result would be conservative. The SSC recommends that the NMFS and ADF&G survey trawls be calibrated in the future so ADF&G survey estimates can be incorporated more accurately.

The 1999 triennial bottom trawl survey resulted in an unusual distribution of biomass westward in the Shumagin area. Unless adjustments are made, this will result in areal allocations of TAC much different than in 1999.

Pacific cod

Difficulties with some aspects of the current Pacific cod stock assessment has lead the author to explore alternatives. The author has come up with a creative length-based model using the Kalman filter approach. The author noted several advantages of this new approach including fewer parameters, the ability to include both process and measurement error, and ease in estimating uncertainty in stock size. The estimates (or guesses) of process and measurement error will be difficult to arrive at and could strongly influence the modeling results. At this early stage it is difficult to judge the probability of success for this new model.

Another approach would be to convert the current synthesis type model to an AD model builder approach. There the author can more easily explore different modeling approaches and assumptions concerning the data. This approach would be worthwhile in determining whether it is data characteristics rather than model characteristics that are causing problems.

Sablefish

The current sablefish assessment has come up with several notable improvements. These include adding data from 1960 to 1978, which allows biomass estimate from 1960 to the present time. This extended analysis indicates biomass estimates are near their historic lows. Another improvement is the addition of an ageing error matrix based on the age determination of known age fish. This data appeared to sharpen estimates of strong year-classes.

Observer and voluntary logbook cpue data were analyzed from the 1990 to 1998 longline fishery. This analysis showed that survey and fishery trends from 1995 to 1998 were the same for all areas except West Yakutat where the survey data steadily declined while the fishery data increased in 1996 to 1997. These data were included in assessment model.

A Bayesian analysis was performed assuming a uniform prior for M, and a prior on log-q that was equivalent to a uniform prior exploitation rate. The resulting posterior distribution looked identical to the normalized likelihood, suggesting equilibrium catch out to 2008 is approximately 15,000 mt.

The SSC recommends that more informative priors than the uniform priors on M and Q be used.

Northern Rockfish

The SSC was shown an early draft of a new AD Model Builder stock assessment model for northern rockfish. Analysis so far shows inconsistencies between age data and length frequency data. Additional age data from the 1996 survey and beyond should help resolve this discrepancy. Despite this problem, the stock assessment scientists might want to consider using this model for the current stock assessment. The reason is that the 1999 biomass of northern rockfish came in quite high, and the Tier 4 ABC may be high. Using the new stock assessment model would use all of the best available information and moderate the 1999 biomass estimate. If this approach were to be used, the SSC recommends using the "alternative" model fit to the age data. Northern rockfish are thought to be easy to age, and the year-class strengths from this approach appears more realistic.

Other Species

Appendices B and C to the draft GOA SAFE continue to show progress in developing our understanding of the Other Species complex. These assessment documents relate closely to the proposed Amendments 63/63 to the Fishery Management Plans to Revise Management of Sharks and Skates. Under the Gulf of Alaska FMP, the TAC for the other species complex is set at 5% of the sum of TACs of managed species. If an alternative is selected to remove sharks and skates from the Other Species complex, any allowable catch will be taken from a complex of much reduced size. This is because approximately 60% of the Other Species biomass, as currently defined, is made up of sharks and skates.

D. New ABC/OFL Plan Amendment

The SSC supports the Plan Teams' recommendation that a new plan amendment be developed that includes consideration of a minimum SST (MSST), as proposed by NMFS, AMCC, and CMC. Grant Thompson presented the staff report and public testimony was provided by Joshua Sladek-Nowlis and Mariel Combs (CMC). The SSC notes (without specifically endorsing the recommendations contained therein) that the proposal by CMC was especially thoughtful and well-written.

History

The Council has continually evolved a TAC-setting process that has resulted in some of the most conservative ABC/OFL recommendations found in the world. The quantitative definition of OFL as a level that avoids jeopardizing the long-term sustainability of managed resources came into being in the early 1990s as a consequence of a NMFS (D.C.) initiative. Two subsequent revisions have been made to strengthen conservation recommendations and to respond to provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The policy most recently approved by the Council is a biomass-based policy wherein fishing mortality is reduced at low population levels below a specified target, separate definitions are given for target (ABC) and limit (OFL) catches, and tiers are set up to accommodate different levels of available information. In addition, the Council has always operated to always set TAC (the actual recommended catch) at or below the ABC level. The SSC noted last year that further consideration of improvements to ABC/OFL definitions would be desirable, including some that were first proposed during initial consideration of the Magnuson-Stevens changes.

Our current ABC/OFL definitions did not incorporate NMFS guidelines that called for a minimum stock size threshold (MSST) that would provide rebuilding within a fixed period of 10 years to an MSY biomass level

using a maximum fishing mortality threshold (MFMT) that is contained within a harvest control rule. The SSC rationale was that the biomass-based policy for ABC and OFL contained sufficient conservation measures to achieve the same goal without the additional complexity and liabilities (see below). The Council concurred with the SSC recommendation and NMFS eventually approved the definitions. Nevertheless, NMFS is requiring the same scientists who so ably work within the Council arena on stock assessments to also perform the status determination evaluation (required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act) using NMFS guidelines. This is creating a confusing, if not untenable, situation for NMFS scientists.

A Possible Solution

The SSC suggests that a subcommittee of about 3 SSC members (Quinn, Kimura, Hare, and/or Criddle) and 3 groundfish Plan Team members be formed to construct alternatives to current ABC/OFL specifications. The full Teams and SSC could then review these alternatives in November and December. This would lead to an amendment package that could be considered by the Council family in April and June, 2000.

The alternatives should be developed after consideration of the following issues:

- A. What are the pros and cons of incorporating an MSST into the groundfish FMPs? Should the MSST follow NMFS guidelines or be altered? Should the MSST be a performance indicator (of how close biomass is to a reference point) or explicitly incorporated into the decision rule? [Currently, there is an MSST for most species calculated by NMFS scientists that follows NMFS guidelines. It will be reported in the November SAFEs.]
- B. Can more precaution be built into Tiers with less information? [See Thompson's earlier work on OFL and the CMC proposal.]
- C. Should the default F's be changed? (e.g., the CMC proposal contains F50% instead of the current F40%.)
- D. Should the current OFLs be altered or dropped altogether? [The current OFLs are based on defining a "bad" fishing mortality to stay away from; the NMFS MFMT's are more like a target than an upper limit.] Is it necessary to define MFMT's as equivalent to OFLs or could maximum permissible ABC's or even TAC's be used instead?

Comments on the NMFS Guidelines

The NMFS Guidelines were set up to implement the stronger language in the Magnuson-Stevens Act regarding overfishing. The SSC has previously commented on the problems with these Guidelines and is discouraged that NMFS has not seen fit to revise these guidelines to cure the flaws previously identified and to allow consideration of alternative approaches that take advantage of modern science. Consequently, the SSC believes that strict adherence to the NMFS Guidelines is problematic for several reasons.

- A. Fish populations fluctuate widely due to a variety of reasons. One of the most important is recruitment fluctuations due to changes in the environment. Setting an MSST that balances conservation concerns with efficacious management is very difficult in these circumstances.

- B. Using BMSY/2 as the lower bound for the MSST is fairly arbitrary and is based on population dynamics concepts that are about 50 years old. The use of such a high value may be draconian in its effect and induce unnecessary management action in light of naturally fluctuating stocks.
- C. The use of a fixed 10 year period for evaluating rebuilding is also arbitrary. It also conveys the impression that we can predict where the population will be ten years hence and ignores where the population currently is in the definition of overfished.
- D. Uncertainty in stock projections is not explicitly considered and the notion of risk is ignored.
- E. The requirement to set an MSST that can "recover" to a target biomass while being fished at F_{OFL} is baffling. By definition, F_{OFL} is defined as a fishing rate which, if continued is likely to jeopardize a stock's long-term productivity. This is clearly inconsistent with the National Guidelines that seem to expect this same fishing rate to also promote stock recovery.
- F. There is strong potential for public confusion concerning the term "overfished". Stocks with wide natural swings in abundance will be classified as "overfished" with minor or no contribution from fishing. Under this definition, there are probably hundreds of species that were "overfished"; and these are species that went extinct long before humans walked the planet. No rebuilding plan, no matter how stringent, would have "rebuilt" these species. All of this is to say that the public's expectation of rebuilding must be tempered with an understanding of ecological possibilities. Since these are often largely unknown, the SSC feels it is appropriate for primary conservation emphasis to be on avoiding overfishing.

The SSC notes that the Council chairmen have raised similar concerns about rebuilding periods and overfishing definitions at their June meeting and in their testimony on MSFCMA reauthorization.

D - 3 Crab Management

The SSC was guided through a review of the crab SAFE by Dave Witherell and Brad Stevens (NMFS). Public Testimony was given by Edward Poulsen, John Gauvin, and Arni Thompson.

The 1999 Crab SAFE is improved over past SAFE documents. The SAFE contains a summary section with information to evaluate stock status, an overview of abundance estimation methods, and rationale for establishing the 2000 GHLL for snow crab.

The SSC was provided a brief overview of the *C. bairdi* rebuilding plan. The draft plan was revised to address comments by the SSC and AP. In particular, the revised plan provided projections of rebuilding, under the rebuilding alternatives.

The SSC briefly reviewed proposals to develop rebuilding plans for *C. opilio* and St. Matthew blue king crab, which fell below the MSST and are now declared overfished. Using the *C. bairdi* rebuilding plan as a model, draft plans will be developed and ready for public review by April, 2000. A stair-stepped harvest policy, bycatch controls, and habitat protection will be examined as possible plan components. The SSC notes that the scientific basis for the current exploitation rates for *C. opilio* is based on a yield per recruit strategy and needs to be re-evaluated in terms of more current information on growth, natural mortality, maturity, and molting probabilities.

It was pointed out in public testimony, that proposals for rationalizing the Bering Sea Crab fisheries such as IFQ or cooperative fishing arrangements, if implemented will result in significantly lower crab bycatch rates. These should be considered as potential alternatives in rebuilding plans.

It was also pointed out in public testimony that trawl-fishing groups were engaged in efforts to reduce their crab bycatch rates. These efforts were very successful and depended on continuing access to data on their respective vessel's catch and bycatches from the observer program. The groups expressed difficulties in obtaining the observer data on an individual vessel basis due to confidentiality restrictions. The SSC urges NMFS to develop means to release this data to trawl fishing groups that are engaged in voluntary efforts to reduce crab bycatches.

Halibut GHL Data Update and Analysis Design

The SSC heard a presentation from Alan Bingham and Rob Bentz (ADF&G) on the statewide harvest survey and saltwater sportfish charter logbook program. Council staff provided a discussion paper that describes an outline for analysis. Public testimony was provided by Doug Ogden (AP member representing sportfishing), Gerry Merrigan (Petersburg Vessel Owners Association), and Robert Johnston (University of Rhode Island for Halibut Coalition).

The ADF&G statewide harvest survey is a self-administered annual mail-out survey of households with licensed anglers. The survey has been administered annually since the late 1970's. The survey is distributed to 45-50,000 households out of the 250,000 household population. The survey is stratified by residency (Alaskan, other US, Canadian, and other foreign). Although the response rate has declined over time, it has stabilized at about 40%. Estimates are usually available in June of the following year. Standard errors of these estimates are derived using bootstrap methods.

The charter logbook survey was initiated in 1998. The first-year results closely correspond with results from the statewide harvest survey. However, the logbook survey produced higher estimates of effort and harvest than corresponding creel census estimates. Although reporting is mandatory and data are to be submitted weekly, the delinquency rate has been about 10%. It is anticipated that the annual estimates can be available by February or March of the ensuing year. Although ADF&G does not have resources for inputting or verifying the logbook data for use in management, this information could be made available on a near real-time basis through additional funding to ADF&G.

The analysts have been responsive to concerns and recommendations expressed in the February 1998 SSC minutes. The current analytic plan seems appropriate given time and data constraints. However, the SSC is concerned that lack of in-season management measures may limit the ability of managers to constrain harvests in this fishery. Moreover, the SSC notes that even in the unlikely event that an initial allocation between charter and commercial operations is optimal, changes in exvessel price, factor costs, willingness to pay for charter trips, etc. will render that allocation suboptimal in subsequent periods. One mechanism that would allow the allocation to self-correct is an IFQ. While this is not an option defined by the Council, it is an option that deserves consideration.

Some additional areas for clarification:

Page 2, items 2 and 4: The last sentences of these two items appear to be confusing, *until* I reached the statement at the end of paragraph 2, page 3: "*Remember that in-season adjustments of quota are not possible*

under the IFQ program.” My suggestion would be to point out near the front that one has a different set of management implications for halibut than, say, for groundfish because (a) the data on halibut sport removals are not available in-season; and (b) the pre-season determination of commercial catch in a year cannot be altered due to the IFQ program.

Page 3, second paragraph: *“The GHL becomes constraining on the commercial sector only when the charter removals reach or exceed the GHL.”* This statement is not quite right: in a fully-subscribed fishery, all levels of GHL are constraining on the commercial fishery if the commercial fishery could otherwise harvest all of the TAC.

SSC Concern 4, page 9: One important element of the concern was comparability in the regional impact models for sport and commercial; my recollection is that, at least initially, one sector’s model predicted state impacts and the other predicted national impacts. This made them effectively non-comparable.

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ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES October 11-14, 1999 Seattle, WA Doubletree Inn, SEA-TAC

Advisory Panel members in attendance:

Acuna, Erika	Gundersen, Justine
Alstrom, Ragnar	Jones, Spike
Benson, Dave	Jordan, Melody
Blott, Tim	Kandianis, Teresa
Bruce, John (Chair)	Madsen, Stephanie (Vice-Chair)
Burch, Alvin	Nelson, Hazel
Cross, Craig	Ogden, Doug
Falvey, Dan	Stephan, Jeff
Fanning, Kris	Ward, Robert
Fuglvog, Arne	Yeck, Lyle
Fraser, Dave	Yutrzeuka, Grant
Ganey, Steve	

C-1 BSAI Pacific Cod Fixed Gear Allocation

The AP recommends the Council adopt the following:

1. BSAI fixed gear cod be distributed as follows:
 - 80% freezer longliners
 - 0.3% catcher longliners
 - 1.4% pot or longline vessels under 60'
 - 18.3% pot vessels over 60'
2. Any unfished portion of the catcher vessel longline and the under 60' vessel quota that is unused shall be rolled over to the freezer longliner fleet in September.
3. Any jig or trawl rollovers would be apportioned between the freezer longline and pot sectors according to the actual harvest of rollovers for 1996- 1998; and
4. NMFS be requested to implement this cod split by emergency rule as early in 2000 as possible; and
5. Bycatch of Pacific cod in other fixed gear fisheries would be subtracted from the overall fixed gear allocation before allocations for the directed fisheries are set. *Motion passed 14/9.*

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(The following substitute motion failed 9/13:

1. *BSAI fixed gear cod be distributed as follows:*
 - a. *0.3% of the fixed gear TAC to the longline catcher vessels*
 - b. *Bycatch of Pacific cod in other fixed gear fisheries would be subtracted from the overall fixed gear allocations for the directed fisheries are set.*
 - c. *After deducting a and b from the fixed gear TAC, the remaining fixed gear TAC is apportioned*
 1. *80% freezer longline vessel*
 2. *20% pot vessel*
2. *All computations are made excluding rollover catch*
3. *Further rollovers of jig or trawl or longline catcher vessel apportionments would be allocated by the same formula used to divide the fixed gear Pacific cod TAC between freezer longliners and pot vessels. [80/20]*

Additionally, an amendment to the main motion that would take "off the top" the 0.3% catcher longliners and the 1.4% pot or longline under 60' before the remaining allocations, failed 11/11/1.

C-2 (a) Performance Report on 1999 Cooperatives

The AP recommends that cooperatives annually must prepare a report containing the information listed below for the Council. A preliminary report covering activities through November 1 by December 1, with a final report by January 30th.

1. Allowed catch and bycatch in pollock and all sideboards by whatever method is used to determine those allocations.
2. Actual catch and bycatch in pollock by vessel and sideboarded fisheries by whatever method is used to determine those sideboards.
3. Method used to monitor fisheries in which cooperative vessels participated
4. Actions taken by cooperatives to enforce vessel or aggregate catches that exceed allowed catch and bycatch in pollock and all sideboarded fisheries. *Motion passed unanimously 23-0.*

C-2 (b) Proposed Rule making for AFA Actions

The AP recommends the Council amend:

Catcher Vessel Sideboards: GOA Groundfish Sideboards

7. Shall be applied throughout the year and the total sideboard cap will be subdivided between vessels with less than 1700 mt of annual pollock landed catch history and vessels with 1700mt or greater and administered as two separate caps.

6. Shall apply at the AFA eligible catcher vessel sector level in 2000. However, NMFS shall publish the proportion of the cap represented by the aggregate catch history of the vessels *under and over 1700 mt* in each cooperative, and encourage the formation of an inter-cooperative agreement to

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monitor the subdivision of the caps at the cooperative level. NMFS shall require each cooperative agreement to contain provisions that would limit its participants to their collective 1995-97 harvest in other fisheries.

Additionally, modify 5 and 6 to use "AFA permitted" to describe vessels. *Motion passed 15/8*

C-2 (c) Processor Sideboards

A single motion covering both crab and groundfish sideboards was bifurcated into two separate actions. *Motion to bifurcate passed 10/9.*

Crab Sideboards

1. The AP recommends the Council adopt a single aggregate processing cap that would apply to all processing facilities owned by inshore or mothership sector AFA entities.

(A motion to adopt a single aggregate cap that would include processing histories of inshore and mothership AFA companies failed 10/10.)

- a. NMFS will determine which processing facilities are owned by inshore or mothership AFA entities using the "limited 10% rule"
- b. Owners of inshore or mothership AFA pollock facilities that process crab under the Council's jurisdiction would be required to identify to NMFS as part of their processing permit requirements any processing facilities in which the owner has more than a 10% interest using the limited 10% rule.

2. A processing facility is any plant or US documented vessel that processes crab under the jurisdiction of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

3. Only the limited 10% rule will be used in determining AFA entities for purposes of the historic processing cap.

4. AFA catcher processors would not be subject to additional processing sideboards.

5. The historic processing cap would be determined annually based on the average of the 1995-1997 processing history of US documented processing vessels and processing plants owned by inshore and mothership AFA entities at the start of the fishing year.

A. If an inshore or mothership AFA entity sells a crab processing facility to a non-AFA entity, or if a processing vessel is no longer US documented, the 1995-1997 average processing history of that plant or vessel is removed from the historic processing cap. Likewise, if an inshore or mothership AFA entity buys a non-AFA processing plant or US

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documented vessel, then the 1995-1997 average processing history of that plant or vessel is added to the historic processing cap.

B. The historic processing cap would be determined based on the percentage of the GHL processed inshore or mothership AFA entities.

C. There would be no cap for undeveloped species or species without a current GHL.

D. The cap would apply year around.

Motion passed 17-4

Groundfish sideboards

1. The AP recommends the Council adopt a single aggregate processing cap that would apply to all processing facilities owned by inshore or mothership sector AFA entities.

A. NMFS will determine which processing facilities are owned by inshore or mothership AFA entities using the "limited 10% rule"

B. Owners of inshore or mothership AFA pollock facilities that process fish under the Council's jurisdiction would be required to identify to NMFS as part of their processing permit requirements any inshore or mothership AFA eligible processing facilities in which the owner has more than 10% interest using the limited 10% rule.

2. A processing facility is any plant or US documented vessel that processes fish under the jurisdiction of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

3. The limited 10% rule will be used in determining AFA entities for purposes of the historic processing cap

4. AFA catcher processors would not be subject to additional processing sideboards.

5. The historic processing cap would be determined annually based on the average of the 1995-1997 processing history of US documented processing vessels and processing plants owned by inshore and mothership AFA entities at the start of the fishing year.

A. If an inshore or mothership AFA entity sells a non-pollock processing facility to a non-AFA entity, or if a processing vessel is no longer US documented, the 1995-1997 average processing history of that plant or vessel is removed from the historic processing cap. Likewise, if an inshore or mothership AFA entity buys a non-AFA processing plant or US documented vessel, then the 1995-1997 average processing history of that plant or vessel is added to the historic processing cap.

B. For fully utilized species, the historic processing cap would be determined based on the percentage of the TAC processed by inshore or mothership AFA entities.

C. Flatfish in the Bering sea would be exempt from any processing caps.

Motion passed 16/3/1

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D. The processing cap would apply to all facilities of AFA entities regardless of whether or not the AFA entity received pollock from a cooperative.

(A motion to amend D which would have only applied caps if facilities of an AFA entity received pollock from any cooperative failed 9/9)

E. The cap would apply year around

F. NMFS would establish a phased-in cap to allow AFA entities to process bycatch after the directed fishing cap is reached. This phased approach should not allow the AFA entities to exceed the aggregate cap.

(A motion to recommend to the Council that they consider these points as a preferred alternative but delay final action until the December meeting failed 6/13.)

Main motion passed 10/7/3.

Additionally, the AP recommends the Council exempt CDQ organizations and their non-pollock and crab investments from the AFA entity rule where the only ownership link is the CDQ organization between an AFA facility or company and other investments by the CDQ organization. *Motion passed unanimously 23-0.*

C-2 (d) Excessive Share Caps

Given the action the AP has recommended for processor sideboards for non-pollock, the need for excessive share caps is unclear and the AP recommends the Council review the need at a later date. But with respect to pollock, the AP recommends the Council move forward with an analysis with the following options and suboptions:

A. Excessive share caps of between 10-20%

SUBOPTIONS

1. Include grandfather provisions.
2. Exclude CDQ pollock
3. Apply "limited 10% rule"
4. Apply at the Company level

Motion passed 18/4.

C-2 (e) Inshore Pollock Cooperative Structure

The AP recommends the Council amend the AFA to allow onshore catcher vessels to change processors without going through an open access year. *Motion passed 21/1/1.*

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AP also recommends 80% or more of the qualified catcher vessels participating in any inshore cooperative be limited to the first calendar year in which the cooperative will receive its allocation pursuant to the AFA. *Motion passed unanimously 23-0.*

Furthermore, the AP recommends:

1. Changing the definition of which vessels may be eligible to join a cooperative to "legally entitled under the 1934 law governing the cooperatives." *Motion passed 18/0/5.*
2. Removing the requirement of a qualified vessel to make a delivery every year in order to be qualified the following year. *Motion passed 20/1.*

Additionally, the AP recommends section 210 (b) relating to catcher vessel inshore cooperatives be amended to add the following new subsections:

1. Cooperative Accepted Catcher Vessels. In addition to the rights of those catcher vessels defined as Qualified Catcher Vessels all 208 (a) onshore catcher vessels whether such vessels harvested pollock in the directed pollock fishery or not, shall be eligible to join any existing AFA onshore cooperative provided:
 - a. The owner of the catcher vessel is accepted for membership in the AFA cooperative based on criteria provided by the individual cooperative on a case by case basis; and
 - b. Prior to the calendar year in which the vessel participates in the cooperative, which shall not be before the year 2001, the owner of the catcher vessel becomes a party to the contract which implemented the fishery cooperative under the same terms and conditions as were accepted by the owners of "qualified catcher vessels." *Motion passed 22-0.*

C-3 Pacific Cod Species / Gear Endorsements

The AP recommends the Council move forward with an EA/RIR/RFA for BSAI Fixed Gear Pacific Cod Species/Gear Endorsements with the following changes to the discussion paper:

1. Catcher longline vessels
 - a. Add 1995
 - b. Add sub-option allowing catcher vessels less than 60' to use their jig landings as part of their catch history to apply towards a minimum landing requirement.

Motion passed 19-0

2. Pot Gear Vessels
 - Qualification years*
 - a. Add option 6 - Any one year 96, 97, 98
 - Qualification landings*
 - b. Add Option 5 - A landing only, no minimum poundage required

Motion passed 21/1.

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3. Add an alternative for analysis a "grandfather" provision that would exempt from the cod species/gear participation and landing requirements catcher/processor vessels that (i) met the original License Limitation Program general qualifying period and area endorsement period requirements for BSAI groundfish non-trawl endorsement; (ii) were purchased prior to December 1998 with the express purchaser intent of being employed in the fixed gear cod fishery, and evidenced by documented processing equipment and/or vessel modification or improvement investments that are specific to groundfish, and (iii) were employed in the fixed gear cod fishery during 1999.

Owners of grandfathered vessels would have a one-time election to choose either a longline or pot endorsement, but not both.

Motion passed 13/9.

Additionally, the AP requests the Council have staff develop a discussion paper for GOA Pacific cod fisheries species/Gear Endorsements similar to options in BSAI with the addition of trawl gear.

Motion carried 20-2.

C-6 Stellar Sea Lions

In the event the Council does not adopt the AP recommendation relative to our actions on the 1700mt exemption, the AP recommends to the Council that the exemption to the seasonal exclusive area requirement for catcher vessels fishing between the BSAI and GOA, for vessels less than 125' in areas 620 (east of 157°) and 630 be removed. *Motion passed 13/7.*

D-1 (a) Non-Pelagic Trawl Gear in Cook Inlet

The AP recommends the Council release the Analysis for public review with the following change:
A. Delete Alternative 8: "Establish Cook Inlet as a Marine Reserve." *Motion passed 20-0.*

D-1 (b) Management of Sharks and Skates in the BSAI/GOA

The AP recommends the Council release the EA/RIR after clarifying that the enacting Federal requirements mirror the State of Alaska Board of Fish regulations and to ban finning for sharks only. *Motion passed 18-0.*

D-2 Groundfish specifications for 2000

The AP recommends the Council release the BSAI and GOA 2000 SAFE documents. *Motion passed unanimously 23-0.*

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The AP also recommends the Council approve the interim BSAI and GOA groundfish specifications in tables 1-5 from the Council Action Memo and GOA Halibut PSC (page 2 of Action Memo) with the following changes:

Tables 3 and 4 and the table for GOA trawl gear: remove seasonal Halibut PSC apportionments with the exception of rockfish. *Motion passed 22-0.*

D-3 Crab Management

The AP recommends the Council adopt the Crab Plan Team recommendations for the Bairdi rebuilding plan:

Harvest strategy - option 2

Bycatch controls - option 1 and Option 3

Habitat - option 2

Motion passed 16-0.

The AP also recommends that the Habitat analysis suggested in Alternative 2C, option 3 be conducted for opilio crab in the rebuilding plan need for that stock. *Motion passed 18/0.*

Finally, the AP urges the Council to form an industry work group to identify issues and actions needed to establish cooperatives for crab. *Motion passed 22-0.*

D-4 Staff Tasking

The AP endorses ranking of the proposals by the Plan Team with the following changes:

The AP recommends the Council initiate analysis of Proposal 8: GOA management split Pacific cod by gear type "mobile/fixed" based on 1994-1998 average and any combination in between. *Motion passed 18-0.*

In addition, the AP requests the Council have staff develop a discussion paper for GOA Pacific cod fisheries species/gear endorsements similar to options in BSAI with the addition of trawl gear. *Motion passed 18-0-1.*

The AP also requests the Council form an industry workgroup to address proposals 9, and 10. *Motion passed 19-0.*

The AP recommends the Council initiate analysis of proposal 7 incorporating the change recommended by the Crab Plan Team focusing on halibut. *Motion passed 19-0.*