

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

There have been several Council mailings since the last meeting, the most recent early last week so you have most of the things that would normally be in this report.

This will be Jim Glock's last meeting as a staff member. He goes to work for the Pacific Council the first of the year. We will all miss him. Jim has been a great team mate and professional in the six years he's been with us and we wish him the best of luck with the Pacific Council; they're getting a good man.

We have been actively recruiting for a replacement. Five of the leading candidates of some 17 or 18 applications received spent all or part of a day at the office last week as each of the staff members talked to them and we assessed their background and capabilities.

There will be a television team here all through this meeting from NHK in Japan. This is a public television network somewhat analogous to BBC in Britain. This unit is from their Sapporo bureau and they're making a 50-minute documentary on the Council and the Alaska fishing industry. It will be seen by 20 million viewers throughout Japan. Actual filming of the Council in session will be held to a minimum to avoid disruption. They will want to talk to many of you on an individual basis. If and when you do so is up to you.

Three items discussed at the September meeting are present but not action items in this meeting agenda. Reporting and permit requirements for U.S. groundfish boats will be placed in the the next amendment cycle for the groundfish plans. Bob McVey, as promised, has developed the guidelines he thinks are necessary in this area. His letter, which will be the basis for the amendment proposal, is under this tab [item B-1(a)].

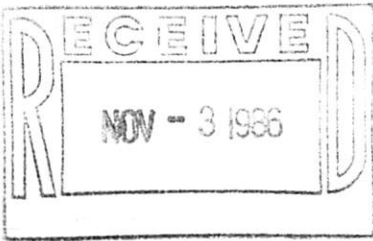
The issue of reflagging has been dormant since Congress adjourned. There'll be an update under Agenda item C-2, Legislation.

Definitions of Allowable Biological Catch and Threshold levels have been adopted by the Pacific Council. Their definition of ABC differs slightly from the one adopted by the Council in Amendment 15. Both definitions are being reviewed by the SSC at this meeting. We will use at least the ABC definition as a proposal for amending the groundfish plans in the next cycle. Since it was in Amendment 15 it can only be changed through another amendment. It would be very useful if the two Councils can agree on the definitions on these critical terms.

The joint venture update normally found under item B-5 has been moved to C-6 for this meeting only. It was felt that it was more appropriate and needed in the review of JVP for 1987 than as a straight special report.

Bering Sea groundfish Amendment 10 will be published as a "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" today, December 9. It should be in effect April 13. Amendment 15 to the Gulf FMP was published as a NPR December 4. Its effective date should be April 8.

The deadline for proposals for the next groundfish amendment cycle is December 12, the last day of this meeting.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service

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October 29, 1986

Mr. James O. Campbell, Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Jim:

The topic of permit requirements for domestic transport vessels was discussed at the September meeting and we indicated that we would clarify the issue for the Council's consideration at the December meeting. First, the topic has been misnamed. The present regulations clearly require U.S. flag transport vessels that are supporting the foreign or domestic fishing fleet to have a permit. Two vessels were cited for failure to have permits this year and were assessed civil penalties. The proper name for the topic is reporting requirements for at sea cargo transfers.

The present foreign fishing regulations require that foreign fishing vessels (FFVs) maintain transfer logs and submit radio message or telex reports of transfer operations. Three separate reports are necessary for each transfer: (1) The FFV which anticipates receiving fish or fish products from a FFV must report the date, time, position, and area the transfer will occur and the name and international radio call sign (IRCS) of the other FFV involved in the transfer; this report must be submitted before the transfer occurs. (2) The FFV offloading must report the name and IRCS of the FFV receiving the cargo and the quantity of fish and fish products offloaded by species, product type, and product weight to the nearest hundredth of a metric ton; this report must be submitted within twelve hours following the transfer operation. (3) The receiving FFV must report the name and IRCS of the FFV delivering the cargo and the quantity of fish and fish products received by species, product type, and product weight to the nearest hundredth of a metric ton; this report must be submitted within twelve hours following the transfer operation. This information must also be maintained in the transfer log aboard each foreign vessel.

These reports are only required for transfers between foreign fishing vessels. A foreign vessel is not required to report transfers to U.S. transport vessels; however, this season the Polish and P.R.C. J/V vessels that offloaded to U.S. vessels volunteered those reports. Also, there presently is no requirement to report the destination port of the transport vessel. There are no requirements for U.S. fishing vessels or transport vessels to submit reports or maintain logs of at sea transfers.



The current foreign fishing regulatory regime was designed to assist in monitoring the accuracy of catch logs and catch reports and to deter vessels from offloading underlogged catches to transport vessels. We see the need to improve our ability to verify the catches taken by domestic fishermen and to monitor the impact of J/V products on domestic markets. The latter need could be resolved by amending the foreign fishing regulations to require reports when fish products are offloaded to U.S. transport vessels just as reports are presently required when transferring to foreign transports. The port of destination could be included in those reports if the cargo were to be offloaded in a U.S. port. However, it may be difficult to hold the foreign J/V vessel responsible for the accuracy of the port data: the transport could amend its voyage after receiving the cargo.

Verifying the catches of domestic fishermen is a complex issue. Currently, our catcher/processors and floating processors must submit weekly catch reports and fish tickets upon landing their products. No other logs or records are presently required. Many of those vessels are offloading their fish products at sea to foreign flag transports for delivery to foreign markets, similar to the practice used by the foreign fleets. For fisheries in which the majority of the catch is taken by that segment of the fleet, we need the ability to confirm at sea the accuracy of catch reporting. A daily cumulative catch log, transfer log, and transfer reports - like the system presently in place for the foreign fisheries - would provide a basis for improved monitoring. At-sea inspections could then be used to verify catch reports. Such confirmation, coupled at some future time with domestic observer coverage, would ultimately allow our domestic catch statistics to achieve the levels of accuracy that characterize foreign catch data.

These changes would require plan amendments and we urge that they be considered in the next amendment cycle. I believe this clarifies the topic that was raised at the last meeting and we hope the issue can be discussed in December.

Sincerely,



Robert W. McVey
Director, Alaska Region