


MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke   
Executive Director

DATE: September 19, 1990

SUBJECT: Halibut Management

**ACTION REQUIRED**

- A. Review report from the International Pacific Halibut Commission on the 1990 fishery and receive stock status report.
- B. Review allocative proposals from the public and recommendations of the halibut Plan Team and Regulatory Amendment Advisory Group. Decide upon allocative proposals to pursue as regulatory amendments.

**BACKGROUND**

A. Halibut Stock Status

The International Pacific Halibut Commission has prepared a Halibut Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report for the Council. This document provides valuable insight into how halibut stocks are evaluated, how halibut bycatch is considered in these assessments, and the overall health of the Pacific halibut population. This document was appended to the preliminary groundfish SAFE documents which were sent to you on September 12.

IPHC staff are prepared to brief the Council on the performance of the 1990 halibut fishery and the procedures used by the Commission in its annual evaluation of stock status and setting harvest quotas.

B. Halibut Management Proposals

In 1987, the Council initiated a process to consider proposals for the allocative management of the halibut fisheries off Alaska, based upon authority of the North Pacific Halibut Act of 1982. A call for proposals to amend regulations for the 1991 Pacific halibut fishery was issued on August 1. 18 proposals were received by the September 10 deadline. They are summarized as Table C-5(a).

The Halibut Management Team met by teleconference on September 19. The Team's recommendations to the Halibut RAAG are attached at item C-5(b). The Halibut RAAG will meet on Monday evening, September 24, to prepare recommendations for the Council. Its report will be distributed during the meeting as item C-5(c). Copies of all proposals were sent to the Council family on September 14.

The Council should determine which proposals it wishes to analyze as regulatory amendments. According to the current schedule, the Halibut Management Team will prepare an analysis of the proposals selected by the Council, a Notice of Availability will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER in October, and the Council will review the analyses and public comments, and recommend which regulatory actions should be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation at its December meeting. This rapid schedule is required in order to coordinate with the IPHC which conducts its annual meeting in January, and to assure implementation of rules in time for next year's halibut fishery.

**Halibut Regulatory Amendment Advisory Group (RAAG) Evaluation of Proposals for 1991 Regulatory Amendment Cycle**

Proposal Number	Proposal Description	Priority RAAG	Team Comments	
<b>Limited Access</b>				
1. } 2. } 3. }	Implement ITQ system.		Council may wish to consider limited access schemes for all longline fisheries concurrently.	
4.	Implement a share quota system.			
5.	Adopt limited entry with a 12-month season.			
6.	Limit entry by individual fishermen.			
<b>Trip Limits</b>				
7.	Implement trip limits with qualifications.			
<b>Rockfish</b>				
8.	Close Sitka Sound Demersal Shelf Rockfish Sanctuary Area to halibut fishing if IFQ system is adopted.		Relates to limited access; refer to State Board of Fisheries.	
<b>Bycatch</b>				
9.	Permit retention of halibut in salmon troll fishery.		Requires groundfish FMP amendment, PAAG rated Low. Research	
10.	Apportion halibut into directed catch and bycatch; apportion bycatch into individual bycatch allowances.			
11.	Investigate mortality of halibut associated with H & L gear.			
<b>Allocations</b>				
12.	Allocate 10% of Area 4 quota to Pribilofs.		Area 4C Area 4B	
13.	Allocate Area 4C quota equally between jigging and longlining			
14.	Allocate 1/3 of halibut quota to jigging.			
17.	No 48-hour openings prior to July.			
<b>Enforcement</b>				
15.	Implement stiffer penalties for enforcement purposes.		Not analyzable.	
16.	Establish rewards for testifying against fishermen who operate with high bycatch rates.			
<b>Other</b>				
18.	Reduce fishing on spawning stocks; establish gear allocations; enact cod pot limits.		A smorgasbord	

## HALIBUT MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT

September 19, 1990

The Halibut Management Team met via teleconference on Wednesday, September 19 to discuss the allocative proposals for the halibut fishery submitted to the Council. Participating in the conference call were: Grant Thompson (chair), AFSC; Steve Hoag, IPHC; Jay Ginter, NMFS-Juneau; Earl Krygier, ADF&G; and Hal Weeks, NPFMC staff.

### Limited Access: Proposals 1 - 6

The Team suggests that the Council consideration of limited access in the halibut fishery be tied to its consideration of the same issue for sablefish. The Council may wish to consider limited access for all longline fisheries (halibut, sablefish, Pacific cod) in a single comprehensive measure. The Team estimates that analysis of a limited access scheme, whether for halibut alone, or all longline fisheries in aggregate, would take at least as much time and effort as the analysis recently prepared for the sablefish fishery.

### Trip Limits: Proposal 7

Trip limits are a traditional management tool which could slow the halibut fishery, although they are typically advocated for conservation, not allocation reasons. If the Council wishes to pursue an analysis of trip limits, the Team considers it a viable option to analyze provided that the allocative problem to be solved, or goal to be reached, is identified prior to the start of the analysis. The Team notes that the analysis of this proposal could not be done in the time available to have regulations prepared for the 1991 fishery.

### Rockfish: Proposal 8

The Team understands that halibut fishing in the Sitka Sound Demersal Shelf Rockfish Sanctuary Area may increase if halibut management changes from its current short openings to an IFQ system. Therefore, this proposal should be considered with the limited access proposals. In addition, it should be brought to the attention of the Alaska Board of Fish for consideration and analysis.

### Bycatch: Proposals 9 - 11

9. This is a legitimate allocational issue for analysis, but it also relates to the broader issue of full utilization. If it is to be addressed, the Council may wish to broaden the scope to consider all hook-and-line gear as a reasonable alternative. The analysis could not be done "on-cycle" for the 1991 season.
10. The Halibut Management Team concurs with the Groundfish Plan Teams that individual bycatch allowances should be considered as a possible element of a comprehensive bycatch management regime for the groundfish fishery.

11. This is a research proposal and the Team suggests it be referred to the IPHC.

Allocations: Proposals 12 - 14, 17

The Team notes that allocative proposals regarding Area 4C have been analyzed in each of the past three years, and that it has proven extremely difficult to predict the allocative outcome of indirect regulatory measures such as trip limits and vessel clearance requirements. During the 1990 season, for example, local fishermen took a smaller share of the Area 4C harvest than in 1988 or 1989, which may not have been the outcome the Council had intended. However, since the Council has indicated a clear preference for indirect management measures (as opposed to direct allocation), the Team is not optimistic about the possibility of improving the situation of another analysis of trip limits. If the Council does choose to pursue this amendment, the Team requests that the Council make its allocative goals known prior to the analysis.

In addition, any consideration of Proposal 12 should be structured to protect against exceeding the Area 4C quota (in case 10% of the combined Area 4 quotas exceed the Area 4C quota). The Team also notes that Proposals 13 and 14 may have allocative implications among local fishermen, as well as between local and non-local fishermen.

In consideration of Proposal 17, the IPHC notes that this was a topic of a joint Council-IPHC meeting in January 1989. To clarify its intent, the Council may wish to reaffirm its support for short (24 hours or less) openings during the early part of the Area 4B season.

Enforcement: Proposals 15, 16.

The Team agrees that penalties for fishing violations should be sufficiently severe to serve as a genuine deterrent. However, analysis of these proposals would be extremely difficult. The Team also notes that specific penalties are not typically the subject of regulatory amendments, and that these proposals do not appear to be allocative in nature.

Other: Proposal 18

This proposal does not address allocation of the halibut resource.

Halibut Regulatory Amendment Advisory Group (RAAG) Evaluation of Proposals for 1991 Regulatory Amendment Cycle

Proposal Number	Proposal Description	Priority RAAG	Team Comments
<b>Limited Access</b>			
1.		Maintain Council Approach	Council may wish to consider limited access schemes for all longline fisheries concurrently.
2.	Implement ITQ system.		
3.			
4.	Implement a share quota system.		
5.	Adopt limited entry with a 12-month season.		
6.	Limit entry by individual fishermen.		
<b>Trip Limits</b>			
7.	Implement trip limits with qualifications.		
<b>Rockfish</b>			
8.	Close Sitka Sound Demersal Shelf Rockfish Sanctuary Area to halibut fishing if IFQ system is adopted.		Relates to limited access; refer to State Board of Fisheries.
<b>Bycatch</b>			
9.	Permit retention of halibut in salmon troll fishery.	Low	
10.	Apportion halibut into directed catch and bycatch; apportion bycatch into individual bycatch allowances.	Premature	Requires groundfish FMP amendment, PAAG rated Low.
11.	Investigate mortality of halibut associated with H & L gear.	IPHC	Research
<b>Allocations</b>			
12.	Allocate 10% of Area 4 quota to Pribilofs.	High	
13.	Allocate Area 4C quota equally between jigging and longlining	Medium	
14.	Allocate 1/3 of halibut quota to jigging.	Medium	Area 4C
17.	No 48-hour openings prior to July.	IPHC Conf. Bd.	Area 4B
<b>Enforcement</b>			
15.	Implement stiffer penalties for enforcement purposes.	NOAA	Not analyzable.
16.	Establish rewards for testifying against fishermen who operate with high bycatch rates.	Enforc.	
<b>Other</b>			
18.	Reduce fishing on spawning stocks; establish gear allocations; enact cod pot limits.	Low	A smorgasbord