



D1 Catch Sharing Plan Allocation Review For the Area 2C and 3A commercial and charter halibut fisheries

February 2022 Council Meeting

Action Memo

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Other Presenters: Kurt Iverson (NMFS) and Mike Fey (AKFIN)
Action Required: 1. Review the Catch Sharing Plan Allocation Review
2. Determine if further action is warranted

BACKGROUND

In July 2016, NOAA Fisheries created an allocation policy directive to ensure fisheries allocations are periodically reviewed against their objectives and remain relevant to current conditions. This allocation review specifically focuses on Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) allocated between the commercial and guided recreational (i.e., charter) sector Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Regulatory Area 2C and 3A.

The CSP, implemented in 2014, defines an annual process for allocating halibut between the commercial and charter fisheries in Area 2C and 3A, specifies a public process for setting charter halibut annual management measures, and authorizes limited annual leases of commercial IFQ for use in the charter fishery as guided angler fish (GAF).

This allocation review provides a description of the way the coastwide Pacific halibut fisheries are assessed and managed, including additional context for the sectors and Areas outside of the Area 2C and 3A CSP. It provides a description of the decisions made within the establishment of the CSP (i.e., allocation decisions, defined management cycle, separate accountability for discard mortality, and the GAF program), and the possible allocation implications for the newly established Recreational Quota Entity. Trends in both the Area 2C and 3A commercial and charter halibut sectors are further described in Sector Profiles that include a set of dashboard metrics. This information aids in the evaluation of the objectives of CSP and the experience under the CSP thus far.

This review is not intended to be an in-depth analysis on the impacts of the allocation; however, it should be sufficient to allow comparison of program goals and objectives and whether they are being met by the current allocation or if other relevant factors have changed enough to warrant an in-depth formal analysis of the allocation. This review and opportunity for public input informs whether or not a consideration of new allocation alternatives (formal analysis) is warranted at this time.

Possible Council Action

There are a number of responses the Council may have relative to the receipt of the Allocation Review. If, after considering this review, advisory bodies, and public testimony, the Council determines that its objectives for the CSP are being met and the program is functioning as intended, then the allocation

review is complete and the 10-year trigger for reevaluation is reset. If the Council deems that its objectives are not being met, it could ask for further analysis considering different allocation percentages of halibut in the commercial and charter sectors. This would lead to more in-depth analysis on the implications of any proposed changes in allocation.

The Council could also initiate discussion papers or analyses to consider modifying other aspects of the CSP Program. While the point of the review is to focus on the allocation, this is also an opportunity to consider the program more holistically if the Council should choose. This would require additional analysis to hone in on the impacts of the proposed change and allow for additional public comment.

Any broader programmatic changes that are within the Council's authority (for example, those involving other halibut user groups) could be considered after receiving the CSP Allocation Review as well. This would also require a separate analytical process.