

Status of analytical projects related to the Halibut & Sablefish IFQ Program

Updated November 2019

Name	Description	Status / Target Date
Projects in Council Review (Council has tasked staff and scheduled review at a future meeting)		
IFQ Access Opportunities	Consider design elements of a quota share “access pool” intended to promote entry into the halibut and sablefish IFQ fishery by entry-level participants. Entry-level is defined as a vessel owner/operator or crew who owns less than 5,000 lbs. of IFQ based on 2019 quota levels. Access pool QS would be held by a non-individual entity and could not be transferred by the eligible participants who qualify to fish the quota. The total amount of access pool QS would be capped at 1.0% of the total amount of quota for each species in each management area. QS could be placed in the access pool either by a one-time allocation or by withholding a percentage of QS that is transferred between existing QS holders until the cap is reached – or some combination of those two mechanisms. The paper will discuss the functionality and scope of the access pool’s impacts, identify Council decision points, and consider issues of consistency with MSA definitions of quota holding entities (e.g., Regional Fishery Associations).	Expanded Discussion Paper February 2020
GOA Sablefish Longline Pot Fishery 3-Year Review	The Council requested a review paper on the functioning of the GOA sablefish longline pot gear fishery to be conducted after three years of implementation. The fishery was implemented for the 2017 fishing year, so the review will cover 2017 through 2019. Staff will include – but is not limited to – information about participation, catch, bycatch, observer coverage, gear loss, and gear conflict. Economic performance data will be included for the 2017 through 2019 fishing years based on what is available at the time the review is scheduled. Staff will also consider any available information that relates to the Council’s policy objectives, including mitigation of whale depredation, safety at sea, and cooperation among fishermen to avoid gear conflict.	Fishery Review June 2020 (Tentative)

Name	Description
Projects not yet scheduled (**order does not reflect priority**)	
Expanded Discussion Paper: Small Sablefish Discards	Continued exploration of issues related to creating an allowance for sablefish discarding in the IFQ longline and pot fisheries. Although initially brought up as a response to the 2014 year-class, stakeholders now see this as a tool they would like to have indefinitely. Topics to be addressed in the paper include mandatory vs. optional release, varying minimum size limits by area, accounting for discards within ABC and TAC, specific options for proxy discard mortality rates (DMR), DMR variability by gear, discard estimation methods, the associated monitoring and enforcement concerns, and impacts of discarding on sablefish abundance and how that affects allocations to IFQ and trawl sectors.
Discussion Paper: Use of Hired Master Provision	Given the increasing use of hired masters in the IFQ fishery, assemble data on hired master use and describe business arrangements between vessel owners, QS holders, and crew to the extent possible. The Council is scoping for potential modifications to hired master regulations that would promote the original program objected of an owner/operator fleet.
Discussion Paper: QS Transfer Mechanisms	Explore regulatory and non-regulatory options that promote willing transfers of QS from initial QS recipients to hired masters and crew, including but not limited to the Right of First Offer concept used in crab cooperatives. Also scope potential for changes to the Federal loan program that would increase use by individuals looking to purchase QS.