

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
December 2-3, 6-9, 2021 - Anchorage, AK

C3 BSAI Groundfish Specs

The AP has reviewed the 2021 Ecosystem Report for the EBS and AI. The AP greatly appreciates the work put into this report each year and, in the future, would like to receive as detailed report as the schedule will allow.

The AP recommends the Council approve the 2021 BSAI Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report.

The AP recommends the Council approve the final 2022 and 2023 BSAI groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC, and the TACs as shown in the attached Table 1 (attached). Note that the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island Pacific Cod TACs have been adjusted for the State Water cod fisheries.

The AP recommends the Council approve Table 7A and 7B, the 2022 (Table 7A) and 2023 (Table 7B) ABC Flatfish Reserves (below).

The AP recommends the Council approve the 2022 and 2023 PSC limits and apportionments as assigned to their respective target fisheries as provided in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11 (below).

The AP recommends the Council approve the updated halibut discard mortality rates for 2022 and 2023 as shown in table 12 (below).

TABLE 7A–PROPOSED 2022 ABC SURPLUS, ABC RESERVES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUOTA (CDQ) ABC RESERVES, AND AMENDMENT 80 ABC RESERVES IN THE BSAI FOR FLATHEAD SOLE, ROCK SOLE, AND YELLOWFIN SOLE

[Amounts are in metric tons]			
Sector	Flathead sole	Rock sole	Yellowfin sole
ABC	64,288	206,896	354,014
TAC	35,500	66,000	250,000
ABC surplus	28,788	140,896	104,014
ABC reserve	28,788	140,896	104,014
CDQ ABC reserve	3,080	15,076	11,129
Amendment 80 ABC reserve	25,708	125,820	92,885

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TABLE 7B—PROPOSED 2023 ABC SURPLUS, ABC RESERVES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUOTA (CDQ) ABC RESERVES, AND AMENDMENT 80 ABC RESERVES IN THE BSAI FOR FLATHEAD SOLE, ROCK SOLE, AND YELLOWFIN SOLE

[Amounts are in metric tons]			
Sector	Flathead sole	Rock sole	Yellowfin sole
ABC	65,988	271,199	326,235
TAC	25,500	55,000	230,000
ABC surplus	40,488	216,199	96,235
ABC reserve	40,488	216,199	96,235
CDQ ABC reserve	4,332	23,133	10,297
Amendment 80 ABC reserve	36,156	193,066	85,938

TABLE 8—PROPOSED 2022 AND 2023 APPORTIONMENT OF PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES TO NON-TRAWL GEAR, THE CDQ PROGRAM, AMENDMENT 80, AND THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTORS

PSC species and area ¹	Total PSC	Non-trawl PSC	CDQ PSQ reserve ²	Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ	Amendment 80 sector ³	BSAI trawl limited access sector	BSAI PSC limits not allocated ²
Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	3,515	710	315	n/a	1,745	745	n/a
Herring (mt) BSAI	3,819	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	32,000	n/a	3,424	28,576	14,282	8,739	5,555
<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	4,350,000	n/a	465,450	3,884,550	1,909,256	1,248,494	726,799
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 1	830,000	n/a	88,810	741,190	312,115	348,285	80,790
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 2	2,520,000	n/a	269,640	2,250,360	532,660	1,053,394	664,306

TABLE 9-PROPOSED 2022 AND 2023 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL SECTORS

Fishery categories	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	222	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/Alaska plaice/other flatfish ¹	110	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	11	n/a
Rockfish	11	n/a
Pacific cod	20	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	3,400	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{2,3}	45	n/a
2022 Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear ⁴	n/a	-
2023 Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear ⁵	n/a	8,000
Total trawl PSC	3,819	32,000

TABLE 10-PROPOSED 2022 AND 2023 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR

BSAI trawl limited access sector fisheries	Prohibited species and area ¹				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	215	7,700	1,192,179	293,234	1,005,879
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ²	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	849
Pacific cod	350	975	50,281	50,816	42,424
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ³	175	65	5,028	4,235	4,243
Total BSAI trawl limited access sector PSC	745	8,739	1,248,494	348,285	1,053,394

TABLE 11–PROPOSED 2022 AND 2023 HALIBUT PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR NON-TRAWL FISHERIES

Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI				
Non-trawl fisheries	Seasons	Catcher/processor	Catcher vessel	All Non-Trawl
Pacific cod	Annual Pacific cod	648	13	661
	January 1-June 10	388	9	n/a
	June 10-August 15	162	2	n/a
	August 15-December 31	98	2	n/a
Non-Pacific cod non-trawl-Total	May 1-December 31	n/a	n/a	49
Groundfish pot and jig	n/a	n/a	n/a	Exempt
Sablefish hook-and-line	n/a	n/a	n/a	Exempt
Total for all non-trawl PSC	n/a	n/a	n/a	710

TABLE 12–PROPOSED 2022 AND 2023 PACIFIC HALIBUT DISCARD MORTALITY RATES (DMR) FOR THE BSAI

Gear	Sector	Halibut discard mortality rate (percent)
Pelagic trawl	All	100
Non-pelagic trawl	Mothership and catcher/processor	84
Non-pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	62
Hook-and-line	Catcher vessel	10
Hook-and-line	Catcher/processor	10
Pot	All	33

Motion passed 18-1

Rationale in Favor:

Table 1. AP recommended TAC with SSC specified OFL, ABC for Groundfish in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (metric tons) for 2022-2023

Species	Area	2021				Catch as of 11/6/2021	2022			2023		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL		ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC	
Pollock	EBS	2,594,000	1,626,000	1,375,000	1,373,712	1,469,000	1,111,000	1,111,000	1,704,000	1,289,000	1,289,000	
	AI	61,856	51,241	19,000	1,635	61,264	50,752	19,000	61,379	50,825	19,000	
	Bogoslof	113,479	85,109	250	50	113,479	85,109	250	113,479	85,109	250	
Pacific cod	BS	147,949	123,805	111,380	105,537	183,012	153,383	136,466	180,909	151,709	133,459	
	AI	27,400	20,600	13,796	7,023	27,400	20,600	13,796	27,400	20,600	13,796	
Sablefish	BSAI/GO	60,426	29,558			40,432	34,521	11,727	42,520	36,318	14,315	
	BS	n/a	3,396	3,396	3,961		5,264	5,264		6,529	6,529	
	AI	n/a	4,717	4,717	1,425		6,463	6,463		7,786	7,786	
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	341,571	313,477	200,000	104,669	377,071	354,014	250,000	347,483	326,235	230,000	
Greenland turbot	BSAI	8,568	7,326	6,025	1,586	7,687	6,572	6,572	6,698	5,724	5,724	
	BS	n/a	6,176	5,125	1,129		5,540	5,540		4,825	4,825	
	AI	n/a	1,150	900	457		1,032	1,032		899	899	
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	90,873	77,349	15,000	8,286	94,445	80,389	20,000	97,944	83,389	20,000	
Kamchatka flounder	BSAI	10,630	8,982	8,982	6,561	10,903	9,214	9,214	11,115	9,393	9,393	
Northern rock sole	BSAI	145,180	140,306	54,500	13,898	214,084	206,896	66,000	280,621	271,199	55,000	
Flathead sole	BSAI	75,863	62,567	25,000	9,898	77,967	64,288	35,500	80,034	65,988	25,500	
Alaska plaice	BSAI	37,924	31,657	24,500	15,653	39,305	32,697	29,221	39,685	32,998	29,082	
Other flatfish	BSAI	22,919	17,189	6,500	2,510	22,919	17,189	10,000	22,919	17,189	10,000	
Pacific Ocean perch	BSAI	44,376	37,173	35,899	32,112	42,605	35,688	35,385	40,977	34,322	33,952	
	BS	n/a	10,782	10,782	8,679		10,352	10,352		9,956	9,956	
	EAI	n/a	8,419	8,419	7,442		8,083	8,083		7,774	7,774	
	CAI	n/a	6,198	6,198	5,885		5,950	5,950		5,722	5,722	
	WAI	n/a	11,774	10,500	10,107		11,303	11,000		10,870	10,500	
Northern rockfish	BSAI	18,917	15,557	13,000	6,045	23,420	19,217	17,000	22,594	18,538	17,000	
Blackspotted/Rougheye Rockfish	BSAI	576	482	482	513	598	503	503	615	517	517	
	EBS/EAI	n/a	313	313	211		326	326		334	334	
	CAI/WAI	n/a	169	169	302		177	177		183	183	
Shortraker rockfish	BSAI	722	541	500	521	722	541	541	722	541	541	
Other rockfish	BSAI	1,751	1,313	916	900	1,751	1,313	1,144	1,751	1,313	1,313	
	BS	n/a	919	522	332		n/a	919	750	n/a	919	
	AI	n/a	394	394	568		n/a	394	394	n/a	394	
Atka mackerel	BSAI	85,580	73,590	62,257	58,571	91,870	78,510	66,481	84,440	71,990	60,958	
	EAI/BS	n/a	25,760	25,760	22,598		27,260	27,260		25,000	25,000	
	CAI	n/a	15,450	15,450	15,272		16,880	16,880		15,470	15,470	
	WAI	n/a	32,380	21,047	20,701		34,370	22,341		31,520	20,488	
Skates	BSAI	49,297	41,257	18,000	18,729	47,790	39,958	30,000	46,475	38,824	30,000	
Sharks	BSAI	689	517	200	354	689	517	500	689	517	500	
Octopuses	BSAI	4,769	3,576	700	161	4,769	3,576	700	4,769	3,576	700	
Total	BSAI	3,945,315	2,747,727	2,000,000	1,774,309	2,953,182	2,406,447	1,871,000	3,219,218	2,615,814	2,000,000	
Sources: 2021 OFLs and ABCs are from harvest specifications adopted by the Council in December 2020, 2021 catches through November 6, 2021 from AKR Catch Accounting.												

Rationale in Favor:

- *The included TAC sheet represents a negotiated consensus position amongst each of the directly affected sectors in the BSAI groundfish fisheries. Both herring and red king crab PSC levels in Table 8 reflect the most recent biomass and abundance information for those species. Halibut PSC apportionments in Table 10 for the TLAS sector reflect an increase to Pacific cod (over 2021) to accommodate the significant increase in the BSAI Pacific cod ABC and TAC for 2022.*
- *For sablefish, the TAC is set to ABC in all BSAI regulatory areas. This is responsive to the majority of public comment, acknowledges improved model performance, and reflects Plan Team consensus that they are not concerned with the amount of fishing pressure on coastwide sablefish. Per the stock assessment, survey abundance and biomass indices continued to increase in 2021. The longline survey abundance index increased by 9% in 2021 following a 32% increase in 2020. The biennial trawl survey biomass index has increased nearly five-fold since 2013, with a 40% increase from 2019 to 2021. The data and model indicate strong year classes from 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018. Based on the strength of these recent year classes, biomass estimates have more than doubled from a time series low of 215,000 t in 2015 to 553,000 t in 2021, exceeding the highs of the mid-1980s. Spawning biomass is also increasing but more gradually since many of these year classes are immature. The 2021 SSB was estimated to be 36% of the B100% value. Spawning biomass is projected to increase to B44% in 2022 and B51% in 2023.*
- *Some members of the AP noted that the Plan Team and sablefish stock assessment suggested that a capped management procedure for sablefish could maximize long-term harvest and could help to prevent long-term cyclical declines as the resource transitions between high and low recruitment regimes. Since sablefish are a long-lived species and have episodic/sporadic recruitment events, exploring use of a maximum (capped) ABC, as compared to a maximum yearly catch strategy, may be beneficial to management of the sablefish stock.*
- *Other members of the AP also noted concerns with the level of the crab PSC limits (given the status of BSAI opilio and red king crab stocks and directed crab fisheries) as well as concerns with application of the Risk Table (recognizing that it is an evolving and developing tool).*