

North Pacific Fishery Management Council
D-2 Small Sablefish Retention, Council Motion
October 8, 2018

The Council moves to initiate a second discussion paper to gather more information on the possible implications of modifying the requirement to retain small sized sablefish in the Alaska IFQ longline and pot fisheries (GOA and BSAI).

The discussion paper should include an evaluation of the following:

- A process for establishing species-specific and gear-specific discard mortality rates (DMR) for sablefish that outlines the work necessary to maintain the relevance of that DMR over time.
- An assessment of the reliability of applying temporary proxy DMRs from other fisheries to the sablefish IFQ longline and pot fisheries and the implications of increased monitoring necessary to establish observer-based DMRs.
- The possibility of allowing discards during years of high abundance versus years of lower abundance and how to establish a threshold between high and low abundance years.
- The possibility of increased whale depredation if discarding is allowed.
- An exploration of gear modifications and methods of fishing that could aid in avoiding small sablefish.
- The implications of small sablefish discards increasing the probability of approaching the overall TAC or exceeding the ABC.
- A discussion about the concerns of fishing down the existing spawning stock.
- Potential for and implications of high-grading under size-based management.
- Add investigation of enforcement options.