

Public Testimony - Groundfish Issues

Mick Stevens, ProFish; Joe Plesha, USA Coalition; Steve Hughes, Midwater Trawlers Cooperative; Barry Collier, PSPA; Paul Fuhs, Dutch Harbor; Ted Evans, AFTA.

Steve Hughes reviewed the results of an industry compromise on the DAP priority and roe stripping amendment proposals. They recommended a 40/60% split for pollock JVP in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands for the periods January 15-April 15 and April 16-December 31. They recommended this compromise be adopted for a two-year period during which time the Council would formulate a comprehensive management strategy for pollock.

Paul Fuhs said he felt this is a fair compromise. He explained that the agreement specifies 40% (net) of the JVP allocation would be allocated in the first three months -- January 15-April 15. For the purpose of calculating the 40%, reserves would be included; however, reserves would not be released until the second period. The remainder of the allocation would be released for the April 16-December 31 period. Any unused portion of the first-season allocation would move to the second season; any reserves would be released in the second season; and any reevaluation of DAP processing capability which would result in an additional allocation would be granted in the second six months. The agreement would cover pollock and last for 2 years - 1988 and 1989 fishing seasons. Industry stresses they want to work with the Council during those two years to develop a comprehensive pollock management strategy.

Mick Stevens also stressed that as part of the agreement industry recommends the Council adopt the status quo for the DAP priority and roe-stripping amendment proposals. Mr. Stevens provided an example of how the proposed management scheme would work.

Barry Collier and Joe Plesha both expressed support for the compromise and urged the Council to consider it.

Ted Evans stressed the importance of Council attention to the pollock resource because of unprecedented pressure on the stocks and urged they begin work on a comprehensive pollock management program during the two years this measure would be in force.

Cindy Lowry, Greenpeace, reviewed written comments submitted on the proposal to increase the OY in the Bering Sea/Aleutians Islands. They urged the Council to adopt the status quo on this issue and asked the Council to adopt the measure to prohibit pollock roe-stripping in all fisheries to protect the stocks.

Thorn Smith, NPFVOA, spoke against the proposed frameworking measures for seasons and prohibited species. He feels frameworking procedures would not allow for the full public review process, but would not oppose such a measure for the sablefish longline fishery. He also stressed that bycatch proposals should be handled on a case-by-case basis and that the Council's Bycatch Committee should be allowed to continue their work on this issue before the Council takes any action. He expressed support for the split-season compromise for pollock JVP in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and urged the Council to adopt an upper OY range of 2.4 million mt in the Bering Sea.

Chris Blackburn, Alaska Groundfish Data Bank, spoke against the season frameworking measure. Frameworks should be used for regulations that have already be set and only used for inseason adjustment; this measure would allow regulations to be set without the full public review process.

Oliver Holm, Kodiak Longliners Assn. Their organization favors the season framework procedures, the PSC framework procedure, and prefer the status quo for the OY proposal. They do not support the split-season compromise submitted by industry because they don't feel it addresses DAP access; but they do like the split-season concept. On sablefish management, Mr. Holm said that the Council should wait for the results of the various surveys being done before taking any action.

Bill Orr, Alaska Factory Trawlers, reviewed written comments submitted to the Council on the various amendment proposals.

Paul Fuhs, Unalaska. Recommended status quo on the OY proposal because of the unknown catches in the international waters of the Bering Sea.

Ted Evans, Alaska Factory Trawlers. In regard to the catcher/processor reporting requirements, Mr. Evans said that they would like to have more details before they could support the proposal. Factory Trawlers are already required to provide more reports and information than other vessels and he feels that a cumulative daily log is unnecessary and burdensome. Recommended the status quo on the OY proposal because of new pressures on the fishery.

Peter Block, Northern Deep Sea Fisheries, spoke about release of additional JV allocations. They have taken approximately 75% of their target quotas. He supports release of the 75,000 mt JVP and release of any excess DAP to JVP. Supports the industry recommendation on the pollock split season.

Fred Yeck, American High Seas Fisheries. They submitted written comments on the amendment proposals and participated in the workgroup to develop a compromise on the pollock split season measure. Urged the Council to adopt the compromise as presented.