















- d) the retention of Pacific halibut in pot gear is already permitted in IPHC Regulatory Area 4A south of the Aleutian Islands in conjunction with the sablefish individual quota fishery, which was instituted in response to a previous NPFMC action.

## 5. FISHERY STATISTICS (2018)

11. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-05 Rev 1](#) which provided an overview of the key fishery statistics from fisheries catching Pacific halibut during 2018, including the status of landings compared to fishery limits implemented by the Contracting Parties of the Commission.

## 6. STOCK STATUS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT (2018) AND HARVEST DECISION TABLE

### 6.1 *Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2018*

12. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-06](#) which provided an overview of the International Pacific Halibut Commission's (IPHC) fishery-independent setline survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2018, including current and future expansions.
13. The Commission **NOTED** that the FISS had 18 stations deemed ineffective because of toothed whale depredation in 2018. Fourteen (14) were caused by sperm whales and four (4) by killer whales. A station is deemed to be ineffective as a result of toothed whale depredation, when sperm whales are sited within 3 nm during the haul-back of the gear (this was an improved protocol for 2018). Ineffective stations are also recorded for killer whales when greater than or equal to two (2) hooks are returned with Pacific halibut lips attached.

### 6.2 *Space-time modelling of survey data (WPUE; FISS expansion results, etc.)*

14. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-07 Rev 1](#) which provided the results of the 2018 space-time modelling of Pacific halibut survey data (which includes data from several fishery-independent surveys), as well as the detailed results of the IPHC fishery-independent setline survey (FISS) expansions in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A, 2B and 2C conducted in 2018.
15. **NOTING** that the 2018 FISS expansion stations had an effect on overall weight-per-unit-effort (WPUE) and number-per-unit-effort (NPUE) in Regulatory Area 2B, the Commission **REQUESTED** model estimates for the WPUE/NPUE time series, and a 2018 estimate in the absence of Regulatory Area 2B FISS expansion data, be incorporated in papers to be presented at the AM095.
16. The Commission **NOTED** that the space-time model was producing estimates for the Strait of Georgia prior to the FISS expansion undertaken in 2018, which were likely close to the mean for Regulatory Area 2B, on the order of 80-90 lb/skate.
17. The Commission **NOTED** that the fixed-station design leads to more precise estimates of trends in abundance, in contrast to designs where station locations would vary from year to year (e.g. fully randomised designs). Estimates of trends from randomised designs include additional variation due to the change of sampling locations, and thus in general yield less precise estimates of trends.
18. The Commission **NOTED** the intention to review the design and implementation of the FISS throughout 2019 based upon the expansions already completed, as well as following the completion of the 2019 expansions in IPHC Regulatory Areas 3A and 3B. Preliminary results will be presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB014) in June 2019, and also to the Commission at its 2019 Work Meeting (WM2019; September 2019) for initial feedback.

### 6.3 *Data overview and preliminary stock assessment (2018), and draft harvest decision table (2018)*

19. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-08 Rev 1](#) which provided an opportunity to consider the results of the 2018 IPHC stock assessment for Pacific halibut within the Convention Area, including data used in the assessment, and the draft harvest decision table for 2019.







results and, in consequence, will propose studies aimed at determining the causes and potential mitigation measures for chalky flesh, to be implemented in 2020, using both Commission and external funds.

#### **7.4** *The role of peer review in the IPHC scientific process*

36. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-11](#) which provided an opportunity to consider options for further improving the peer review process for IPHC science products.
37. The Commission **AGREED** on the need to implement enhanced independent peer review mechanisms for key IPHC science products, and that the intention of the IPHC Secretariat is to further consider the options described in paper IPHC-2018-IM094-11, and present a refined version of the paper at the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM095) in January 2019, for potential decision.

## **8. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION**

### **8.1** *IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update*

38. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-12](#) which provided an update on the MSE including goals and objectives, the simulation framework, results for management procedures consisting of a range of SPR values from 0.56 to 0.30 and three control rules: 25:10, 30:20, and 40:20, a distribution framework, possible elements of management procedures related to distribution, and a 5-year program of work.
39. The Commission **NOTED** the expected delivery dates of January 2019 for the coastwide results, and January 2021 for the final Scale and Distribution components of the management procedure for potential adoption by the Commission and subsequent implementation.
40. The Commission **NOTED** that:
- a) all current Management Procedures with an SPR greater than 40% met the biological objective;
  - b) no Management Procedures without a constraint on the annual change in the catch limit met the average annual variability objective;
  - c) the Total Mortality increased slightly with increasing fishing intensity but with a wide range;
  - d) at SPR values less than 40% (higher fishing intensity) the average annual variability increased at a greater rate and the median yield was similar.
41. The Commission **NOTED** the distribution framework and the potential elements of management procedures that may be useful to distribute the TCEY.
42. The Commission **NOTED** that there may be a need to develop an objective of maintaining the stock at or near a target biomass, and that this objective may be related to a fishery objective incorporating economic outcomes or fishery performance, for example.

### **8.2** *Reports of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB011 and MSAB012)*

43. The Commission **NOTED** the Reports of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB011: [IPHC-2018-MSAB011-R](#); MSAB012: [IPHC-2018-MSAB012-R](#)) which was presented by Mr Adam Keizer (Canada) and Dr Carey McGilliard (U.S.A). The MSAB consists of 21 board members, 18 of which attended the Session from the two (2) Contracting Parties. A total of four (4) individuals attended the Session as Observers. In addition, three (3) IPHC Commissioners were in attendance, Mr Paul Ryall (Canada), Mr Bob Alverson (U.S.A.) and Mr Richard Yamada (U.S.A.).
44. The Commission **NOTED** that TCEY distribution among Regions could be modified through management procedures, and that the distribution from coastwide mortality to Regulatory Areas may occur at any step in the process.

## 9. CONTRACTING PARTY (AGENCY) UPDATES

45. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-INF03](#) which was developed by the IPHC Secretariat in response to the Commission's request (IPHC-2017-IM093-R; IM093.Req.07, para. 61) to develop a standard template for agency reports to the Commission, in order to improve their structure and consistency, as well as to allow the agencies to prepare the appropriate information at the appropriate level of detail for the Commission's consideration.
46. The Commission **AGREED** to consider the draft Contracting Party reporting template (IPHC-2018-IM094-INF03) inter-sessionally, and to provide feedback throughout 2019. Consideration will be given to the generic agency template, as well as the need or desirability of a broader template whereby a single report would be provided for each Contracting Party, rather than by individual domestic agencies.

### 9.1 *Canada*

#### 9.1.1 *Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)*

47. The Commission **NOTED** that no update on Pacific halibut matters was received from Fisheries and Oceans Canada for consideration at the IM094.

### 9.2 *United States of America*

#### 9.2.1 *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – Fisheries*

##### *a) National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-Fisheries)*

48. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-AR02](#), which provided an update from NOAA-Fisheries West Coast Region.

##### *b) North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC)*

49. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-AR03](#), which provided an update from the NPFMC on Council actions related to Pacific halibut, research priorities, and abundance-based Protected Species Catch (PSC) management (ABM).
50. The Commission **NOTED** the ABM objectives are:
- Pacific halibut PSC limits should be indexed to halibut abundance;
  - Pacific halibut spawning stock biomass should be protected especially at lower levels of abundance;
  - There should be flexibility provided to avoid unnecessarily constraining the groundfish fishery particularly when Pacific halibut abundance is high;
  - Provide for directed Pacific halibut fishing operations in the Bering Sea;
  - Provide for some stability in PSC limits on an inter-annual basis.
51. The Commission **NOTED** the various indices of Pacific halibut abundance being considered in the ABM analysis, including the different components of the Pacific halibut stock assessed by each and the implications of using these indices for managing bycatch.
52. The Commission **NOTED** that the NPFMC Pacific halibut ABM stakeholder working group is limited to individuals directly engaged in the fishing industry, either directed fishers or their representatives, or from the non-directed fisheries catching Pacific halibut.
53. The Commission **REQUESTED** a detailed report of the NMFS observer program in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska, including coverage rates, to be submitted and presented to the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM095), **NOTING** the offer from the NPFMC to facilitate this report and presentation.
54. The Commission **REQUESTED** a detailed paper and associated presentation on the deck sorting EFP be presented at the AM095, including its effectiveness and resultant reductions in Pacific halibut mortality, **NOTING** the offer from the NPFMC to facilitate this report and presentation.

*c) Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC)*

55. The Commission **NOTED** that no update on Pacific halibut matters was received from the PFMC for consideration at the IM094, other than the letter ([IPHC-2018-IM094-INF05](#)) pertaining to Regulatory Proposal [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropA2](#), which is detailed below.

## 10. REGULATORY PROPOSALS FOR THE 2018-19 PROCESS

### 10.1 *IPHC Secretariat regulatory proposals*

#### *10.1.1 IPHC Pacific Halibut Fishery Regulations: Fishery Limits (Sect. 4)*

56. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropA1](#), which aimed to improve clarity and transparency of fishery limits in the IPHC Fishery Regulations, and that it would be considered in detail at AM095.

#### *10.1.2 IPHC Pacific Halibut Fishery Regulations: Commercial Fishing Periods (Sect. 9)*

57. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropA2](#), which proposed fishing periods for the commercial Pacific halibut fisheries.

58. The Commission **NOTED** the analysis of the non-tribal directed commercial fishery in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A already completed by the IPHC Secretariat, included in PropA2 and presented to the PFMC and its subsidiary bodies.

59. The Commission **NOTED** information paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-INF05](#), the PFMC's letter to the IPHC in response to PropA2, and expressed appreciation for the attention the PFMC and its subsidiary bodies have given the question of future management of this fishery.

60. The Commission **NOTED** the initial feedback received by the IPHC Secretariat from the survey of IPHC Regulatory Area 2A license holders over the past 3 years, indicating a strong preference for longer fishing periods (more than 80%) and a plurality for the 10-day fishing period option (over 40%). The IPHC Secretariat intends to contact the remaining license holders for their responses, intersessionally for further consideration at AM095.

61. The Commission **NOTED** the intention of the IPHC Secretariat to continue to work with the PFMC and relevant agencies over the intersessional period, to alleviate any concerns raised, prior to the AM095.

#### *10.1.3 IPHC Fishery Regulations: minor amendments*

62. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropA3](#), which proposed amendments to ensure clarity and consistency in the IPHC Fishery Regulations, and that it would be considered in detail at AM095.

### 10.2 *Contracting Party (by agency) regulatory proposals*

63. The Commission **NOTED** that no Contracting Party regulatory proposals were received for consideration at the IM094.

### 10.3 *Stakeholder regulatory proposals*

#### *10.3.1 Minimum TCEY in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A*

64. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropC1](#), which proposed adopting a TCEY for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A that supports a FCEY no lower than 1.5Mlb. In years when the distribution would indicate a FCEY higher than 1.5Mlb is available, that number would be adopted.

65. The Commission **NOTED** that a TCEY that produces an FCEY of 1.5Mlb for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A does not currently represent a conservation concern for the stock.

66. The Commission **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat summarise the impact of stakeholder Regulatory Proposal [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropC1](#), including example mortality projection tables, for

consideration at the AM095. This will allow the Commission to view the impact on other Regulatory Areas and sectors, as well as the overall conservation risk at a coastwide level.

### **10.3.2 IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Quota Proposal**

67. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropC2](#), which proposed introducing an individual quota system for the non-tribal directed commercial 2A fishery.
68. The Commission **NOTED** that this proposal should be considered in the context of the overall future direction of management for this fishery, which is the subject of ongoing consultation with the PFMC and the relevant agencies.

### **10.4 Stakeholder statements**

69. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-INF01](#) which provided a consolidated document containing seven (7) 'Statements' from stakeholders on regulatory proposals and Commission activities.

## **11. IPHC PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

### **11.1 Update on progress regarding the implementation of the 1<sup>st</sup> IPHC Performance Review recommendations**

70. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-13](#), which detailed the current status of implementation for each of the recommendations arising from the Report of the 1<sup>st</sup> IPHC Performance Review Panel (PRIPHC01).

### **11.2 2<sup>nd</sup> IPHC Performance Review: update**

71. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-14](#), which provided the Commission with an update on progress regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Performance Review of the IPHC (PRIPHC02) and an opportunity to direct the IPHC Secretariat regarding its completion.
72. The Commission **NOTED** that the IPHC Secretariat will undertake and complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> Performance Review in 2019, with the intention of presenting a draft report and associated recommendations at the 95<sup>th</sup> Interim Meeting in November 2019, and for final adoption at the 96<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM096) in January 2020.

## **12. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **12.1 Financial Statement for FY2018**

73. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-15](#) which provided a provisional year-end FY2018 financial statement for the Commission (financial period: 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018).
74. The Commission **REQUESTED** that a breakdown of budget and expenses for the FISS expansions undertaken in 2018 be reported at the AM095, taking into consideration that some of those calculations would be proxies given the changes to the FISS charter regions during expansions.

### **12.2 Budget estimates for FY2019 and FY2020 for approval**

75. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-16](#) which detailed the proposed amendments to the current (FY2019) budget estimate (financial period: 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019), as well as that for FY2020 and tentatively for 2021.
76. The Commission **NOTED** that the proposed modifications to the FY2019 budget, are in accordance with Regulation 5, paragraph 10 of the IPHC Financial Regulations (2018) which states:
- “10. The Executive Director may, in any fiscal year, transfer funds in an amount not exceeding 1% of the total budget (including any unobligated funds carried over from previous year/s, as described in Rule 5, paragraph 6) between categories within the current years' budget. The Chairperson of the Commission may, in any fiscal year, authorize the Executive Director to transfer funds in an amount exceeding 1% of the total budget between categories.”*

77. The Commission **NOTED** that the fiscal year 2020 is preliminary and the final figures will be presented for approval at the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM095) in January 2019.

### **12.3** *Draft: IPHC Financial Regulations (2019)*

78. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-17](#) which provided the Commission with an initial opportunity to consider proposed amendments to the IPHC Financial Regulations.

79. The Commission **NOTED** that a detailed revision of the IPHC Financial Regulations will be provided for consideration at the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting in January 2019.

### **12.4** *Independent auditor's reports: 2017, 2018*

80. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-18](#) which provided an update on progress on the IPHC financial audit for 2017, and dates for the 2018 audit.

### **12.5** *Draft: IPHC Rules of Procedure (2018)*

81. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-19](#) which provided the Commission with an initial opportunity to consider proposed amendments to the IPHC Rules of Procedure.

82. The Commission **AGREED** to review the draft amendments in the intersessional period and to provide suggestions for improvement prior to the paper deadline of 29 December 2019, for inclusion and potential adoption at the AM095.

### **12.6** *IPHC Memorandum of Understanding, and Agreements*

83. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-20](#) which provided the Commission with an opportunity to consider current MoUs and Agreements between the IPHC and other organisations.

84. The Commission **REQUESTED** that current practice, whereby the Executive Director is the sole signatory of MoUs and Agreements with other organisations, continue, as long as those arrangements are based on the sharing of information for scientific purposes (e.g. with PICES, academic institutions etc.).

## **13. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **13.1** *Preparation for 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (2019)*

85. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-21](#) which provided an opportunity to direct preparations for the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting, to be held in Victoria, BC, Canada, from 28 January-1 February 2019.

86. The Commission **NOTED** that information concerning the meeting, including electronic versions of documents to be considered, will be published on the [95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting \(AM095\)](#) webpage as they become available, but no later than 30 days prior to the commencement of the Session (29 December 2018), in accordance with Rule 8.4 of the IPHC Rules of Procedure (2017).

### **13.2** *IPHC meetings calendar (2019-21)*

87. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2018-IM094-22](#) which provided an opportunity to consider the draft IPHC meetings calendar (2019-21).

88. The Commission **RECALLED** that the 96<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM096) was set to be held in Alaska, USA, and that Sitka was being examined as an option by the IPHC Secretariat. However, due to meeting space, accommodation, and dining restrictions identified in January 2021, the IPHC Secretariat was recommending holding the meeting in an alternative location, such as Anchorage.

89. The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that:

- a) the 96<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM096) be held in Anchorage or Juneau, USA, and that the IPHC Secretariat would communicate meeting specifics in due course;
- b) a meeting of an IPHC subsidiary body (e.g. the MSAB), to be determined by the IPHC Secretariat, should be held in Sitka, Alaska in 2019.



















**APPENDIX IV****CONSOLIDATED SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF THE 94<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM094) (27-28 NOVEMBER 2018)****RECOMMENDATIONS*****IPHC meetings calendar (2019-21)***

IM094–Rec.01 ([para. 89](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that:

- a) the 96<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM096) be held in Anchorage or Juneau, USA, and that the IPHC Secretariat would communicate meeting specifics in due course;
- b) a meeting of an IPHC subsidiary body (e.g. the MSAB), to be determined by the IPHC Secretariat, should be held in Sitka, Alaska in 2019.

**REQUESTS*****Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2018)***

IM094–Req.01 ([para. 9](#)) The Commission **NOTED** the new functionality added to the IPHC website in 2018, and **REQUESTED** that these initiatives continue to be enhanced:

- e) [Fishery-Independent Setline Survey \(FISS\) data interactive](#)
- f) [Regulations portal](#), including the online [regulatory proposal submission form](#)
- g) [Landings Report](#)
- h) [Mortality projection tool](#)

***Space-time modelling of survey data (WPUE; FISS expansion results, etc.)***

IM094–Req.02 ([para. 15](#)) **NOTING** that the 2018 FISS expansion stations had an effect on overall weight-per-unit-effort (WPUE) and number-per-unit-effort (NPUE) in Regulatory Area 2B, the Commission **REQUESTED** model estimates for the WPUE/NPUE time series, and a 2018 estimate in the absence of Regulatory Area 2B FISS expansion data, be incorporated in papers to be presented at the AM095.

***Contracting Party (Agency) updates: North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC)***

IM094–Req.03 ([para. 53](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** a detailed report of the NMFS observer program in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska, including coverage rates, to be submitted and presented to the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM095), **NOTING** the offer from the NPFMC to facilitate this report and presentation.

IM094–Req.04 ([para. 54](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** a detailed paper and associated presentation on the deck sorting EFP be presented at the AM095, including its effectiveness and resultant reductions in Pacific halibut mortality, **NOTING** the offer from the NPFMC to facilitate this report and presentation.

***Stakeholder regulatory proposals: Minimum TCEY in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A***

IM094–Req.05 ([para. 66](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat summarise the impact of stakeholder Regulatory Proposal [IPHC-2018-IM094-PropC1](#), including example mortality projection tables, for consideration at the AM095. This will allow the Commission to view the impact on other Regulatory Areas and sectors, as well as the overall conservation risk at a coastwide level.



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***Financial Statement for FY2018***

IM094–Req.06 ([para. 74](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that a breakdown of budget and expenses for the FISS expansions undertaken in 2018 be reported at the AM095, taking into consideration that some of those calculations would be proxies given the changes to the FISS charter regions during expansions.

***IPHC Memorandum of Understanding, and Agreements***

IM094–Req.07 ([para. 84](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that current practice, whereby the Executive Director is the sole signatory of MoUs and Agreements with other organisations, continue, as long as those arrangements are based on the sharing of information for scientific purposes (e.g. with PICES, academic institutions etc.).