

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON TRAWL INDIVIDUAL QUOTAS: STAGE I
ALTERNATIVES AND PROGRESS REPORT ON STAGE II

The Habitat Committee (HC) discussed Trawl Individual Quotas (IQs). The HC endorses the gear switching option which allows fishermen to use any gear (not just trawl gear) to fulfill their quotas. The HC recommends expanding this option to include the use of any gear types that reduce habitat impacts and bycatch of non-target species.

The HC also recommends expanding the concept of reserving quota shares for community benefit to also include the concept of reserving quota shares for testing fishing techniques that reduce bycatch and habitat impacts. This could be an incentive program to seek out better ways to catch fish with minimal adverse impacts to other species and habitats.

The HC believes that a privileged access to a fishery resource through IQs should imply an additional responsibility to share data. The HC supports analyzing existing logbook data and believes managers should have appropriate access to existing observer, video, and vessel monitoring system data (while recognizing confidentiality concerns). Managers should also be creative about collecting future fishery data. A combination of technologies, such as video and global positioning systems, could be used to track how many and what fish are being removed from specific areas. The use of appropriate technology may allow the observer program to collect better data while minimizing inconveniences to fishers.

Finally, the HC supports developing options for finer area management. Because quota shares may lead to shifts in effort based on economic or other factors, managers may need finer levels of area management to control excessive effort in various areas.

PFMC
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