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## FOREIGN AND JOINT VENTURE FISHING

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Two types of fishing operations involving foreign vessels were conducted off Washington, Oregon, and northern California after implementation of the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (later renamed the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act – herein, the Magnuson-Stevens Act) in 1977. The foreign trawl fishery (sometimes called the "directed fishery") in which fish are both caught and processed by foreign vessels, began before the Magnuson-Stevens Act and continued through 1988. The joint venture fishery, a domestic fishery in which U.S. trawl vessels deliver their catch to foreign processing vessels at sea, began in 1978 and ended in 1990. Foreign vessels were managed according to the groundfish fishery management plan's regulations at 50 CFR 611.70 and the conditions and restrictions attached to individual foreign vessel permits issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The U.S. catcher vessels in the joint venture were managed according to the regulations at 50 CFR 663, the same as U.S. vessels delivering shoreside.

Consistent with the intent of the Magnuson-Stevens Act to encourage development of domestic fisheries, joint venture, and shore-based landings of whiting generally increased after 1978 (Table 56). Although shore-based deliveries of whiting grew during this period, they comprised less than 5% of the total foreign and domestic harvest of whiting each year from 1978 to 1990. However, with the introduction of the domestic at-sea processing fleet in late 1990, U.S. processors took 7% of the whiting quota (8,115 mt by shore-based plants and 4,713 mt by at-sea processing vessels). In 1991, U.S. processors completely displaced joint venture foreign processing.

In spite of the opportunities for joint venture and foreign fisheries, only 64% of the total whiting quota between 1978 and 1990 was landed. However, after 1989, more than 90% was taken annually.

The last year of foreign domination of groundfish landings was 1979 (Figure 2). After 1980, domestic landings (joint venture and U.S. processed) annually contributed at least two thirds of the total groundfish landings, over 90% in 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1988. In 1985, due to the resurgence of the Polish directed fishery and diminished Soviet joint venture, about 70% of the total groundfish landings were made by domestic vessels. This percentage was maintained in 1986 as joint venture and foreign trawl landings increased. However, in 1986, shore-based landings of whiting decreased, apparently U.S. fishers switched to the more lucrative shrimp fishery. The proportion of domestic landings of groundfish increased to 80% in 1987 and 93% in 1988. In 1989 and 1990, with no foreign trawl fishery for whiting, the groundfish fishery off Washington, Oregon, and California was 100% domestic, as intended by the authors of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. In 1991, foreign processing of whiting at sea by joint ventures was replaced by the expanding domestic processing industry, predominantly the at-sea processing fleet that had been built primarily to harvest pollock in Alaska.

From its inception in 1978 until 1984, the joint venture for whiting grew steadily, and in 1984 accounted for almost half (47%) of the domestic landings of *all* groundfish species. However, in 1985, only 26% of the domestic groundfish landings were attributed to joint ventures. This decline occurred from reduced Soviet participation. (When the Soviets were "certified" by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce for excessive harvest of minke whales, their potential allocations were cut in half. The Soviets responded by not accepting any allocation for directed fishing in 1985 and reducing their joint venture contracts by half.) The trend of increasing proportions of joint venture landings in the domestic groundfish fishery resumed in 1986 and continued until displaced by U.S. processors in 1991. In 1986, joint venture landings virtually equaled shore-based landings of all groundfish species (including whiting) taken off Washington, Oregon, and California. In 1988, 1989, and 1990, joint venture landings contributed 59%, 68%, and 64%, respectively, of the domestic groundfish landings off Washington, Oregon, and California.

Considering *all* groundfish (foreign and domestic) landed off Washington, Oregon, and California, the joint venture accounted for 43% in 1983, 1984, and again in 1987. In 1988, the proportion increased to 54%,

peaked at 68% in 1989, and dropped to 64% in 1990, before being eliminated in 1991.

Some species that are fully utilized by domestic processors were caught unavoidably in the foreign and joint venture fisheries. These catches were not counted against quotas imposed on U.S. landings, and only small allowances were permitted in order to discourage their harvest. Only once did incidental species account for more than 2% of the annual catch in the foreign trawl fishery; in 1980 when 6% were taken. In the joint venture, less than 5% of the annual U.S. catch delivered to foreign processing vessels (including species that subsequently were discarded) were incidental species, and generally less than a quarter of these were retained by the foreign vessels.

Salmon and Pacific halibut are prohibited species, which means they must not be retained by any vessel involved in the directed foreign or joint venture fishery. Between 1977 and 1988, the average catch rate of salmon in the foreign fishery was one salmon per 12 mt of whiting (0.086 salmon per mt of whiting). Between 1978 and 1990, the joint venture vessels averaged about one salmon per 9 mt of whiting received (0.110 salmon per mt of whiting). Interception of salmon in joint ventures was unusually high in 1986. Although the whiting quota was at its highest level in 1986, joint venture trawlers had difficulty finding fishable concentrations. In the areas where they operated, the abundance and availability of some salmon stocks were quite high, contributing to the unusually large interceptions of salmon in 1986. In 1987 and thereafter, the catch and catch rate of salmon in both the foreign and joint venture fisheries were lower than in 1986. In 1990, the joint venture catch of salmon was slightly higher than in the previous year, and the catch rate was about half (one salmon per 18 mt of whiting) the 1978 to 1990 average (one salmon per 9 mt of whiting).

Generally over 90% of the salmon taken in these fisheries were chinook. In the joint venture in 1990, 98% of the salmon were chinook, averaging 55.3 cm (21.77 inches) in fork length and 2.23 kg (4.9 pounds) in weight. Only 1.4% were chum, averaging 51.5 cm (20.3 inches) in fork length and 1.86 kg (4.1 pounds) in weight. Less than 0.4% were coho salmon in the 1990 joint venture.

Between 1977 and 1990, small numbers of Pacific halibut were taken in these fisheries, averaging about one halibut in 1,100 mt of whiting in the foreign fishery and one halibut in 1,700 mt of whiting in the joint venture. The joint venture took one halibut in approximately 2,300 mt of whiting in 1990, well below the 13-year average.