

## PACIFIC HALIBUT BYCATCH ESTIMATES

The Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) West Coast Groundfish Observer Program (WCGOP) will brief the Council on the status of Pacific halibut bycatch estimates for the 2012 groundfish trawl and fixed gear fisheries (Agenda Item D.1.b, WCGOP Report). Additionally, WCGOP provided further analysis in response to a 2012 request by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) (Agenda Item D.1.b, WCGOP Response to SSC). The SSC is expected to review and provide comments on the reports. Council action under this agenda item is to review and provide guidance on the Pacific halibut bycatch estimates which will be submitted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to the International Pacific Halibut Commission Area (IPHC) for use in establishing the 2014 Pacific halibut total allowable catch.

Additionally, the NWFSC provided two spatial data products requested by the Council. The first depicts Pacific halibut catch data collected by WCGOP and the At-Sea Hake Observer Program between 2002 and 2011 stratified by gear type (Agenda Item D.1.b, WCGOP Request). The second data product displays Pacific halibut catch by tow in the NWFSC bottom trawl survey from 2003-2008 (Agenda Item D.1.b, Trawl Survey Request).

### **Council Action:**

- 1. Utilizing input from the SSC, provide guidance, as necessary, to the completion of the bycatch estimates and its transmittal by NMFS to the IPHC.**
- 2. Review data products provided by the NWFSC.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item D.1.b, WCGOP Report: Pacific Halibut Bycatch in U.S. West Coast Groundfish Fisheries (2002-2012).
2. Agenda Item D.1.b, WCGOP Response to SSC: Supplemental Material for SSC Review of the NWFSC Observer Program Annual Report on Pacific Halibut Bycatch in the U.S. West Coast Groundfish Fisheries: Response to 2012 SSC Comments and Suggestions.
3. Agenda Item D.1.b, WCGOP Request: Council Request for WCGOP Data.
4. Agenda Item D.1.b, Trawl Survey Request: Council Request for the NWFSC Bottom Trawl Survey Data.

### **Agenda Order:**

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. National Marine Fisheries Service Recommendation
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Review and Provide Guidance on the Pacific Halibut Bycatch Estimate for use by the International Pacific Halibut Commission in 2014 Fisheries