

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
2012 PACIFIC HALIBUT REGULATIONS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) considered proposed alternatives submitted by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to the Pacific halibut catch sharing plan and the current regulations for the halibut fishery in IPHC area 2A. A presentation was given to GAP members by representatives from ODFW and WDFW.

GAP Recommendations:

The GAP supports the recommended alternatives in the ODFW and WDFW Reports contained within Agenda Item D.1.b. with one exception concerning the Oregon Central Coast Subarea. The GAP believes that an increased transfer of quota to the nearshore from 8 to 12 percent may be excessive to meet the requirements when the new flexibility is added to the picture. If the transfer amount were to be reduced to 10 percent along with ability to transfer quota from spring fishery the GAP believes that the seasons could be completed successfully with less risk of having stranded quota at season end. For 2011 an estimated 2000 pounds will be unharvested. The spring all depth fishery which is structured to have fixed days followed by makeup days could be set allowing charter operators to confidently book trips. Any makeup days needed for fixed day non realization due to adverse weather could then be considered for transfer as those days would be less likely to have advance bookings by charter operations.

For the South of Humbug Subarea the GAP supports a status quo for 2012 as described in the IPHC letter dated October 28, 2011 by Bruce Leaman, PhD. The support also includes resolution during 2012 of issues involving northern California pacific halibut. These issues include development of assessment/apportionment, and a monitoring and management framework. It is also recommended that the Council request of the IPHC to implement survey methods in northern California to better inform stock status in that area.