

ROCKFISH ALLOCATIONS

Situation: Last year when the Ad-Hoc Allocation Committee (Committee) was formed, the Council tasked the Committee to work on allocating rockfish species among recreational and commercial fisheries and among gear types within the commercial sector. Two primary issues drive the move towards rockfish allocation at this time. First, allocations would be necessary to implement the Council's proposed trawl buyback program, which will require allocations to ensure that those who paid for a buyback would receive benefits in the future. The NMFS proposed rule concerning capacity reduction programs concurred that allocations are necessary before going forward with a buyback program. Second, whether or not a buyback program goes forward, allocations might be appropriate to control growth and/or guide development of the groundfish sectors in the future. The limited entry program was intended to stabilize the groundfish fishery and prevent or slow growth due to the overcapitalization that already existed. The Committee recommended the Council investigate where fishery growth has occurred since implementation of limited entry and provide direction on how and where fishery growth occurs in the future. The Committee did not feel it had enough information to proceed and requested input from the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP). The GMT provided information on distribution of rockfish landings by gear type and by state from 1995 through 1998. In April, the Council asked the GAP to assemble rockfish species into groups based on occurrence, such as nearshore, shelf, and slope. Both the GMT and GAP are scheduled to discuss this at their June meetings.

Council Action:

- 1. Give direction to teams, subpanels, and advisory bodies on allocation of rockfish.**

Reference Materials:

None

PFMC
06/09/99