

STATUS OF 2002 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES

Situation: The 2002 Pacific halibut season in the Council management area is winding down. After August 16, 2002, only a few fisheries remain, including the incidental halibut catch in the directed longline sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, Washington. Other fisheries with remaining quotas include the Central Oregon all-depth recreational fishery and the south Washington recreational fishery. Supplemental Attachment 1 provides a preliminary report summarizing the harvest in the 2002 Pacific halibut fisheries in Area 2A to date.

Dr. Elizabeth Clarke, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), will brief the Council on the status of bycatch estimates for Pacific halibut in the Council-area groundfish trawl fishery. The estimates for bycatch in the 2000 groundfish trawl fishery in International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Area 2A were revised by the IPHC subsequent to approval by the Council last September as a result of mis-communication between NMFS, the Council, and the IPHC regarding some technical concerns with the estimation methodology. Those concerns have been worked out satisfactorily among the parties (Exhibit F.1, Attachments 1 and 2), and are addressed in the 2001 bycatch estimates.

The halibut bycatch estimates for the 2001 groundfish trawl fishery in Area 2A waters should be completed just prior to the September Council meeting. A report will be provided to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) for review with the intent of providing estimates to the IPHC to use in establishing the 2003 halibut fisheries.

Council Task:

- 1. Utilizing input from the SSC, provide any needed Council guidance to the completion of the bycatch assessment and its transmittal to the IPHC.**

Reference Materials:

1. Letter to Mr. Bruce Leaman, IPHC Executive Director, from Dr. Elizabeth Clarke and attached report: *Estimates of Pacific Halibut Bycatch and Mortality in IPHC Area 2A in 2000* (Exhibit F.1, Attachment 1).
2. Letter to Dr. Elizabeth Clarke, NMFS, from Mr. Bruce Leaman (Exhibit F.1, Attachment 2).
3. Preliminary Report on the 2002 Pacific Halibut Fisheries in Area 2A (Exhibit B.1, Supplemental Attachment 1).

Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum Overview
- b. NMFS Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. Council Discussion

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PFMC
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