

AD HOC GROUND FISH TRAWL INDIVIDUAL QUOTA COMMITTEE REPORT ON
BYCATCH MONITORING PROGRAM DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT

The Ad Hoc Groundfish Trawl Individual Quota Committee (TIQC) met March 18-19, 2004 to continue work on developing alternatives for the TIQ program. Mr. Jim Glock provided a presentation on the programmatic bycatch environmental impact statement (PBEIS). TIQC members expressed concern that the adoption of certain alternatives in the PBEIS might prematurely constrain the range of alternatives being considered by the TIQC. The alternatives being considered by the TIQC include status quo (no individual fishing quota [IFQ] program) and IFQs to cover all groundfish species caught with trawl gear. However, within that range there are alternatives which would, for example, limit the IFQ program's coverage to those species that are of nearly exclusive interest to the trawl fishery or already allocated between the trawl and other sectors. Such mid-range alternatives would allow the IFQ program to proceed in the absence of Council action to explicitly allocate species not covered by the IFQ program. Trawl harvest of nonIFQ species (e.g., many of the overfished species) would be projected in a fashion similar to what is done for the current overfished species score card. For the nonwhiting fishery, harvest of nonIFQ species would be controlled through measures such as cumulative catch limits. The cumulative catch limit approach would differ from the current cumulative landing limits in that vessel operations would cease upon reaching a catch limit (the current cumulative limit system applies to landings, and catch is accounted for based on estimates of fleet incidental catch rates). The TIQC is considering an alternative under which these cumulative limits would be transferable within a period, except for those species with extremely low optimum yields (OYs) (e.g., overfished species). Species with extremely low OYs might also be managed with area-specific sector catch caps. Under sector catch caps, there may or may not be vessel cumulative catch limits, but a sector's operations would cease when the catch cap is reached. For the whiting fishery catch of nonwhiting species would be managed as a sector catch cap.

PFMC
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