

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
UPDATE ON TRAWL INDIVIDUAL QUOTA PROGRAM

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) met to discuss the Council's Trawl Individual Quota (TIQ) process and the draft scoping document being considered by the Council.

In regard to the TIQ process, the GAP focused on three issues: how the TIQ development and implementation should interface with inter-sector allocations; representation on the TIQ committee; and whether the TIQ process should be deferred until other actions such as development of national IQ standards and completion of a programmatic groundfish environmental impact statement took place.

On the first issue, there was general consensus that inter-sector allocations should be expedited so all parties and all fisheries sectors can know what they are dealing with. The GAP and members of the public voiced their concern that the existing Council Ad Hoc Allocation Committee seemed to spend more time on Council management issues than on dealing with inter-sector allocations. There were suggestions the committee might need to be restructured, but no specific recommendations on what a new structure would look like.

Regarding representation on the Ad Hoc Groundfish TIQ Committee, the majority of the GAP believed that existing representation was satisfactory, that the public had ample opportunity to comment, and that too large a committee would be unworkable. A minority of the GAP agreed the size of the committee should remain the same, but that membership should be broadened.

Regarding deferral of action, a minority of the GAP recommended the Council should wait until Congress acts on national IQ standards before proceeding further with the TIQ process. The majority of the GAP recommended the process should continue.

The GAP unanimously agreed to accept the draft scoping document with one change: on page 1-2, wording should be added to reflect the GAP's concern that inter-sector allocations should be expedited, so they can be completed prior to final implementation of a TIQ system.