

Pacific Halibut Bycatch in IPHC Area 2A in the 2003 Groundfish Trawl Fishery

by

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Overview

- Update of model used to estimate halibut bycatch in the 2002 fishery.
- For most tows, average bycatch rates were calculated for each of 64 strata, using observer data from September 2002 through August 2003.
- All Oregon Selective Flatfish EFP tows were observed.
 - Halibut bycatch in those tows summed separately.
 - That bycatch was not included in calculating rates applied to other tows.

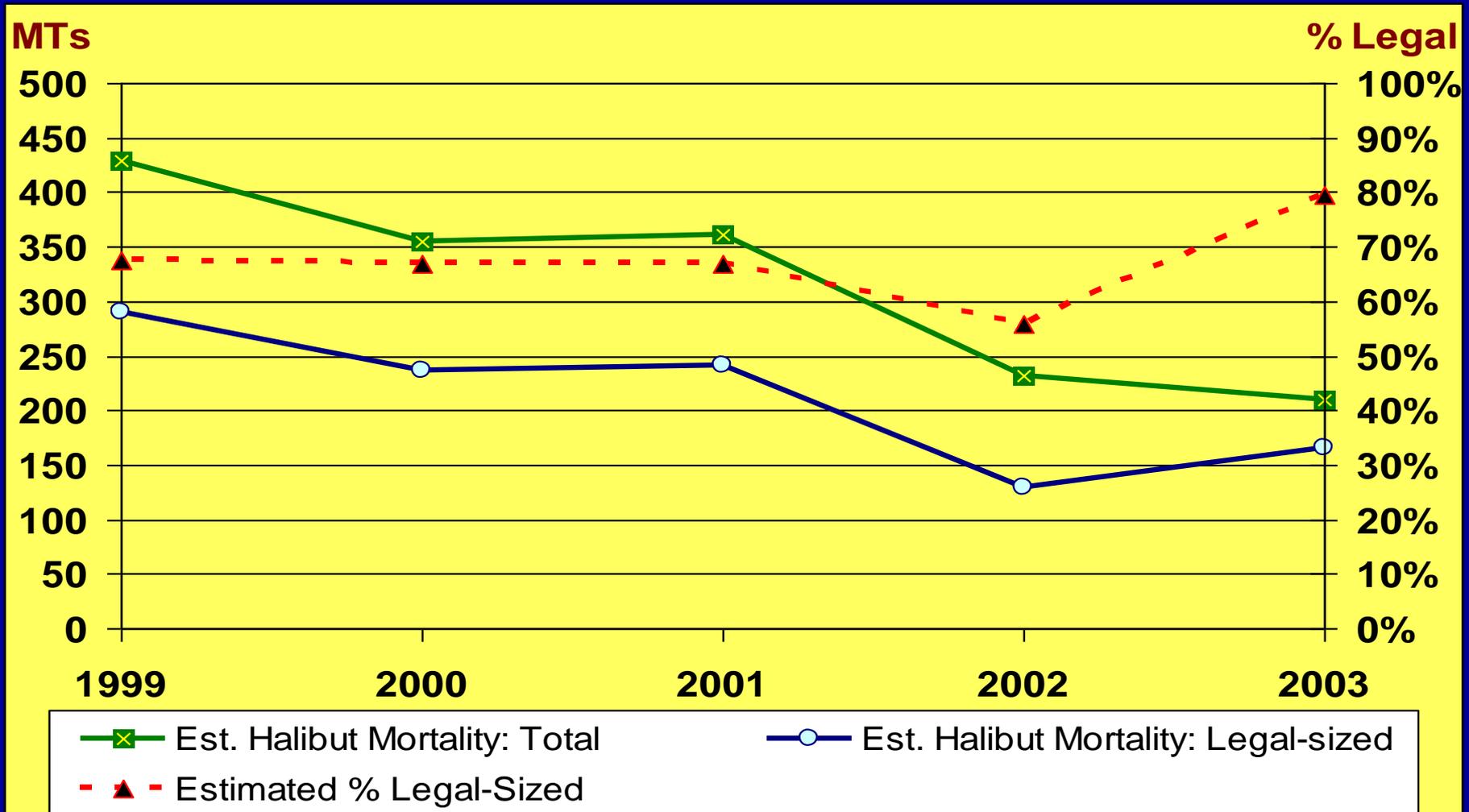
Stratification used in analysis

- **Season** (Jan-Aug and Sept-Dec).
- **Depth** (0-75, 75-150, 150-250, 250-700 fm).
 - adjusted to capture RCA boundaries
- **Arrowtooth catch rate** (0-20 and >20 lb/hour).

2003 logbook data used to distribute trawl hours among strata.

Ratio of 2003 fishticket and retained logbook groundfish tonnage used to expand logbook results.

Overall and legal-sized halibut bycatch mortality in the 1999-2003 shoreside groundfish fisheries



70% of the estimated discard tonnage of legal-sized halibut occurred in 3 of the 64 strata

- All 3 occurred in:
 - January – August time period
 - 47.67° - 48.67° N. Lat.
 - depths shallower than 150 fm
- 2 of the 3 strata had more than 20 lb of arrowtooth per hour
- The 3rd stratum had less than 20 lb of arrowtooth per hour

Summary

- Overall halibut bycatch mortality continued to decline in 2003 (roughly half of the amount in 1999).
- Rather large increase in the rate at which legal-sized halibut were encountered off northern Washington in depths shallower than 150 fm.