

Attention Groundfish Trawl Crew and Captains: Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program Being Considered

WHAT is being considered

Individual Fishing
Quotas (IFQs) for the West Coast
Groundfish Limited Entry
Trawl Fishery

WHO is considering it

The Pacific Fishery
Management Council, the states of
Washington, Oregon and California,
and the National Marine
Fisheries Service

WHEN will it happen

It is being considered now.
If adopted, it will not
take place until 2010 at the
earliest.

IFQs are also
known as ITQs
(individual transfer-
able quotas), TIQs
(trawl individual
quotas), QS (quota
shares) and QP (quota
pounds)

SOME POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF IFQs:

There might be fewer vessels and fewer jobs
Remaining vessels might make more and operate more days a year
Remaining jobs might be safer and more stable
Over time, vessels and jobs might be in different ports than they are now
Crew and captains might be paid more or paid less
Special entry-level opportunities might be created
Crew, captains and others could become owners in the fishery by acquiring small amounts of quotas at a time

SEE THE ATTACHED FLYER FOR MORE INFORMATION

or call (866) 806-7204 toll free, or visit <http://www.pcouncil.org/groundfish/gfifq.html>

Public comments should be sent to Mr. Donald Hansen, Chairman, Pacific Fishery Management Council,
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, Oregon 97220-1384, or emailed to pfmc.comments@noaa.gov



ATTENTION TRAWL CREW AND CAPTAINS

Trawl crew and captains may be affected by potential changes to the West Coast trawl fishery. Read below to learn more about what's going on and decide if it could be helpful for you to get involved.

What's going on?

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (or “the Council”), the organization responsible for coordinating management of fisheries off California, Oregon, and Washington, is in the process of organizing a new management system for the groundfish trawl fishery. This new system is a **trawl individual quota program** (often called an Individual Transferable Quota, ITQ, or an Individual Fishing Quota, IFQ).

An IFQ is a specific portion of a fishery's total harvest limit that can be harvested solely by the individual or business holding the IFQ. When IFQ is expressed as a percentage it is called a **quota share**. Though the amount of quota pounds given to quota share holders may change as the total allowable harvest increases or decreases, the privilege to harvest the quota pounds is more-or-less guaranteed for the year (though the IFQ program could be canceled or changed by decisionmakers at a future time).

If this program is put in place, the trawl fishery is likely to **consolidate**. That is, the most efficient vessels will continue fishing and accumulate more quota shares, while the less efficient vessels will leave the fishery. The result is that there may be fewer trawl vessels along the coast, but the remaining vessels may have higher profits and operate for more days each year. In order to enter into the fishery, a person would have to purchase or lease quota from someone else.

One of the reasons that some people are in favor of an IFQ system is that it makes fishing more **flexible**. The trawl fishery would no longer be managed by trip limits, at least for target species and possibly for all species. By knowing that their quota of fish is reserved exclusively for them to harvest over the year, fishermen under the IFQ system can look for markets for their product when it's the best time to fish – such as when the weather is safest or when the market prices are high. IFQs should also allow vessel owners to do more long-term business planning than before, because there will be more certainty about the amounts they will be able to harvest. This may make the West Coast trawl fishery more stable in the long-term.

How could these changes affect YOU?

There are a number of good and bad ways that crew and captains could be affected by an IFQ program. Some are listed below. Over the next year, the Council will be deciding exactly how to structure the program; how they choose to organize the program could make the impacts to crew and captains lesser or greater.

- § Fewer vessels means fewer jobs for crew and captains
- § Trawl vessels under the IFQ program may be located in different home ports than they are now.
- § Remaining jobs may be safer and more stable
- § The jobs may pay better... or they may pay worse
- § Crew, captains, and others may have an opportunity to become owners in the trawl fishery by purchasing small amounts of IFQ at a time.
- § Special entry level opportunities might be created.

Why is it helpful for crew and captains to get involved?

So far, the Council has heard little from crew and captains during the process of developing the IFQ program. Listening to comments from the public is an important part of how the Council makes decisions. The Council needs to hear how you feel the IFQ program would affect you and specific ways that the program could be changed to lessen negative impacts.

How can crew and captains get involved?

You can get involved on your own or work together with others. There may be organizations already in place that you could become involved with.

Here are some different ways to voice your ideas to the Council:

- Present your comments during a Council meeting;
- Talk with someone in your area who is already involved with the Council (such as a Council member or a member of a Council advisory committee);
- Write a letter to the chair of the Council (send to the address below).

Your comments are most effective when they are related to the kinds of decisions that the Council is making at that time. See below for a key to that timing.

For more information

- Read more about IFQs and what the Council is proposing at: <http://www.pcouncil.org/facts/ifq.pdf> and http://www.pcouncil.org/groundfish/gfifq/Status_0606.pdf
- Read “Navigating the Council process” for more info on what the Council is and how to get involved in the Council process: <http://www.pcouncil.org/guide/Guide-intropage.html>.
- See the links to trawl and other organizations on the Council’s website at <http://www.pcouncil.org/links.html>
- Call the Council office at (503) 820-2280

Public comments should be sent to: Mr. Donald K. Hansen, Chairman Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101 Portland, Oregon 97220-1384 Or: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Future Council Meetings	
<u>2006</u>	
Nov. 12-17	Del Mar, CA (near San Diego)
<u>2007</u>	
March 4-9	Sacramento, CA
April 1-6	WA or OR (location TBD)
June 10-15	Foster City, CA (near San Francisco)
Sept. 9-14	WA, OR, or CA (location TBD)
Nov. 4-9	San Diego, CA

Expected Timeline	What's going on	Useful kinds of public comment
Fall 2006 – Winter 2007	Council and Council staff are continuing discussions the options for how to structure the IFQ program and analyzing how these options could affect the fishery.	Explain how the IFQ program could affect you; Suggest ways that the program could be adjusted to change those impacts
Winter 2007 – Spring 2008	Council makes final decision on the specifics of the IFQ program.	Describe whether the analysis accurately reflects how the IFQ program would affect you; Explain which, if any, of the options for how to structure the IFQ program is best in your opinion
Summer – Fall 2007	NMFS considers whether or not to implement the IFQ program that the Council developed.	Explain to NMFS why you think the program should or shouldn't be put in place.
2010	Fishing under IFQ program begins	