

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON TRAWL INDIVIDUAL QUOTAS:
STAGE I ALTERNATIVES AND PROGRESS REPORT ON STAGE II

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed trawl individual quota (TIQ) development documents in the briefing book and was briefed by staff. The GAP continues to believe that timely development and implementation of a comprehensive individual quota (IQ) program for the groundfish trawl fishery is a high priority. However, the GAP continues to be frustrated by the complexity of the information. The GAP believes we would be better able to provide constructive input to the TIQ development process if the information was presented in a more comprehensible manner. The GAP recommends the Council direct staff to work with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Region to structure the alternatives into programmatic themes, for example, a structure that best fits the needs of the trawl fishery, a structure that best fits conservation needs, and a structure that best fits community needs. The GAP also recommends the Council direct staff to review the current alternatives to determine if specific aspects could be individually analyzed. These individual analyses could help determine if certain alternatives could be modified or eliminated; a task the GAP is continually asked to perform, but has been unable to accomplish.

The GAP also believes that several issues currently impeding the TIQ development process should be dealt with by the Council, including – harvest quota shares to processors, inter-sector allocation, and de-coupling of the whiting fishery from the TIQ program.

The GAP continues to get hung up on the issuance of harvest shares to processors. The GAP suggests the Council consider formal action on this issue in the near future.

Secondly, the GAP urges the Council to make significant progress on the issue of inter-sector allocation.

Finally, the GAP discussed (but could not resolve) the question of whether the whiting trawl fishery should be de-coupled from the non-whiting trawl fishery in development of the IQ program. However, the GAP believes this is an important issue that merits formal consideration by the Council.

Specific to the current TIQ alternatives, the GAP recommends addition of two alternatives:

1. Under permit stacking – scale cumulative limits to limited entry permit history.
2. Under eligibility criteria – only individual U.S. citizens or single-owner U.S. corporations should be eligible to obtain quota shares through purchase, lease, or transfer. Corporations and individuals eligible to receive initial allocation of quota shares would be exempt from this requirement.

Finally, the GAP discussed the United Catcher Boat (UCB)/Mothership sector proposal (Agenda Item C.7.d, Public Comment) for a cooperative management alternative under the IQ program. Like IQs, cooperative-based management is a type of Limited Access Privilege Program. The GAP is not recommending that the specific alternative in the UCB/Mothership proposal be added

to the TIQ analysis. However, a majority of the GAP believes there are merits to the cooperative-based management approach and recommends the Council add for an analysis a cooperative-based management approach (developed by all stakeholders) to the TIQ program.

Minority Report:

A minority of the GAP recommends the Council not include for development a fallback option to the TIQ Program. The co-op program, as outlined by the mothership sector, in concert with others within that sector, is particularly troublesome and should not go forward in its present form for the following reasons:

There was testimony in the GAP regarding development of co-op type management would speed up and facilitate development of the TIQ program. Exactly the opposite is the case. It will require program development, as well as allocation on the sector and the individual vessel level. Allocation to sectors and vessels is an integral component in development of the TIQ system, is ongoing and must be completed before either the TIQ program, stacking or co-ops management can be implemented.

Legislative action is needed to implement co-ops as outlined in the mothership proposal. This will take time and may be more burdensome than completion of an IQ program.

The inclusion of co-op management as a fall back, should the TIQ program not be implemented, will provide an incentive for those who favor this option to undermine the IQ program thereby assuring its failure.

The dedicated time and money which has been spent on the IQ program must not be squandered or wasted. The Council and staff should focus on the primary task at hand - completion of the TIQ program.

This proposal would create a closed class of fishers and processors. Floating processors would be recognized as a class. This issue concerning processors and how they will be dealt with under a Dedicated Access Program has yet to be decided by the Council.

Neither the TIQ Committee, nor the GAP discussed particular components but moved to a majority and minority statement posture.

We believe, if the Council is to go forward with development and analysis of a co-op type management it should be an open concept, developed with all stakeholders, managers and Council. Many fishers who do not belong to UCB, Midwater Trawler Cooperative and other stakeholders, have not been consulted, and have not signed off. They should be included.

The options contained within the TIQ analysis should be modified to facilitate co-op management, not as a separate program.

We are all frustrated with the slowness and now near stagnation in the TIQ process, however, we should stay the course. Completion of an IQ system for the trawl sector will deal with all the issues more effectively than through a co-op. The GAP heard testimony to the effect many

fishers would not favor a co-op alternative if they thought the trawl quota program would 'ever' be completed.

Any further delay in implementing the trawl IQ program continues to facilitate waste, inefficiency and lack of real-time science. It is important the Council rededicates itself, without distraction, to the development of the IQ program. Let's put all our resources into scaling hurdles such as processor consideration, inter-sector and individual allocation, where appropriate, as well as sector definitions and move this program forward.

PFMC
09/14/06