

PROPOSED PROCEDURES FOR ESTIMATING PACIFIC HALIBUT BYCATCH IN THE GROUND FISH SETLINE FISHERIES

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFS) has been developing methodology to estimate Pacific halibut bycatch and bycatch mortality in Council-area groundfish setline fisheries. In September 2008, the subject was raised during Agenda Item E.1, which focused on trawl bycatch estimates. At that time the Council recommended NMFS continue to refine methods, including methods to disaggregate data using port of landing and seasonal landing data. The Council scheduled a two meeting process to consider the estimation methodology and the policy implications of any resulting estimates with International Pacific Halibut Commission activities and domestic fishery management activities. The initial consideration of these issues was scheduled for the June 2009 Council meeting, with the second consideration at the September 2009 Council meeting, coincident with the Council's review and recommendations on trawl fishery bycatch estimates.

The NWFS has reviewed the halibut mortality rate estimation methodology associated with fixed gear fisheries (Agenda Item D.1.b, NWFS Report). Dr. Jim Hastie, NMFS, will brief the Council on the status of bycatch estimates for Pacific halibut in setline fisheries.

Council Task:

- 1. Provide Council guidance on procedures to estimate bycatch and bycatch mortality of Pacific Halibut in Council Area set line fisheries.**
- 2. Consider policy implementations of utilizing such new information.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.1.b, NWFS Report: Letter Regarding Mortality of Pacific Halibut in the Fixed Gear Fishery.
2. Agenda Item D.1.d, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Northwest Fisheries Science Center Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Review and Provide Guidance on Appropriate Bycatch Estimation Procedures

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PFMC
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