REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION MEETING

The 2011 Annual Meeting of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) was held in Victoria, B.C. January 25-28, 2011. The most significant outcome of the meeting was setting the 2011 harvest levels (Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 1), which involved discussions of how to apportion the total allowable catch (TAC) among the various catch areas. The Area 2A TAC was up from 0.81 million pounds in 2010 to 0.91 million pounds in 2011 (Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 2). Another significant outcome, from the Area 2A perspective, was the adoption of the Pacific Council's recommendation for a lower halibut bycatch mortality assessment for the newly rationalized groundfish trawl fishery. Historically, recent year estimates were used to assess trawl bycatch mortality; this new method uses a hard cap equivalent to 130,000 pounds (net weight) of legal-sized halibut.

Ms. Michele Culver, Council representative to the IPHC, attended the annual meeting, along with numerous other interested parties from Area 2A. Ms. Culver has provided a brief summary of the results of the meeting (Agenda Item F.1.b, Meeting Summary).

Council Task:

1. Discuss information relative to Area 2A halibut fisheries.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 1: IPHC News Release.
2. Agenda Item F.1.a, Attachment 2: 2011 Area 2A Pacific Halibut Allocations.
3. Agenda Item F.1.b, Meeting Summary: Summary of International Pacific Halibut Commission Meeting.

Agenda Order:

a. Agenda Item Overview — Chuck Tracy
b. Meeting Summary — Michele Culver
c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
d. Public Comment
e. Council Discussion

PFMC
02/09/11

News Release

2320 W. COMMODORE WAY, SUITE 300, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98199-1287

January 31, 2011

HALIBUT COMMISSION COMPLETES 2011 ANNUAL MEETING

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) completed its Eighty-seventh Annual Meeting in Victoria, B.C., with Dr. Laura J. Richards of Nanaimo B.C. presiding as Chair. The Commission is recommending to the governments of Canada and the United States catch limits for 2011 totaling 41,070,000 pounds, an 18.9% decrease from the 2010 catch limit of 50,670,000 pounds.

The Commission staff reported on the 2010 Pacific halibut stock assessment, comprised of a coastwide estimation of biomass with apportionment to regulatory area biomass based on the data from the annual Commission standardized stock assessment survey. For 2011, the Commission staff recommended a 21.5% harvest rate for use in Areas 2A through 3A and a 16.1% harvest rate for Areas 3B through 4. The Commission staff expressed concern over continued declining catch rates in most areas and recommended aggressive action to reduce harvests. In particular, staff recommended that the Commission shift its harvest control rule to implement the full reductions in catch limits identified by the stock assessment, rather than the partial (50%) reductions used in previous years. The decline of the stock due to both natural declines in recruitment, lower growth rates, and higher than target harvest rates in most areas has motivated this change in the harvest recommendations. Catch limits adopted for 2011 were lower in the central regions of the stock (Areas 2C and 3) but significant recent reductions in catch limits for Areas 2A and 2B appear to have resulted in improvements to stock condition in those areas.

Seasons and Catch Limits

The Commission received regulatory proposals for 2011 from the scientific staff, Canadian and United States harvesters and processors, and other fishery agencies. The Commission faced very difficult decisions on the appropriate harvest from the stock and recognized the economic impact of the reduced catch limits recommended by its scientific staff. However, the Commission believes that conservation of the halibut resource is the most important management objective and will serve the best economic interests of the industry over the long term. Accordingly, the Commission is recommending to the governments the following catch limits for 2011 in Area 2A (California, Oregon, and Washington), Area 2B (British Columbia), Area 2C (southeastern Alaska), Area 3A (central Gulf), Area 3B (western Gulf), Area 4A (eastern Aleutians), Area 4B (western Aleutians), Area 4C (Pribilof Islands), Area 4D (northwestern Bering Sea), and Area 4E (Bering Sea flats):

2011 Catch Limits

Regulatory Area	Catch Limit (pounds)
Area 2A	
Non-treaty directed commercial (south of Pt. Chehalis)	159,380
Non-treaty incidental catch in salmon troll fishery	28,126
Treaty Indian commercial	293,200
Treaty Indian ceremonial and subsistence (year-round)	25,300
Sport – North of Columbia River	216,489
Sport – South of Columbia River	187,506
Area 2A total	910,000
Area 2B (includes sport catch allocation)	7,650,000
Area 2C	2,330,000
Area 3A	14,360,000
Area 3B	7,510,000
Area 4A	2,410,000
Area 4B	2,180,000
Area 4C	1,690,000
Area 4D	1,690,000
	340,000
Area 4E	8,310,000
Area 4 total	
Total	**41,070,000**

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada (DFO) will allocate the Area 2B catch limit between sport and commercial fisheries.

The IPHC sets biologically-based catch limits for Areas 4A, 4B, and a combined Area 4CDE. The catch limits for Regulatory Areas 4C, 4D, and 4E reflect the catch-sharing plan implemented by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC). The catch-sharing plan allows Area 4D Community Development Quota (CDQ) harvest to be taken in Area 4E and Area 4C Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) and CDQ to be fished in Area 4D.

The catch-sharing plan implemented by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) for Area 2A was adopted by the Commission and is reflected in the catch limits adopted for the Area 2A fisheries. Due to the mechanisms in the PFMC catch-sharing plan and the adopted total Area 2A catch limit there will not be a non-treaty incidental halibut fishery during the limited entry sablefish longline fishery.

In Area 2A, seven 10-hour fishing periods for the non-treaty directed commercial fishery are recommended: June 29, July 13, July 27, August 10, August 24, September 7, September 21, 2011. All fishing periods will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 6:00 p.m. local time, and will be further restricted by fishing period limits announced at a later date.

Area 2A fishing dates for an incidental commercial halibut fishery concurrent with salmon troll fishing seasons will be established under United States domestic regulations by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The remainder of the Area 2A catch-sharing plan, including sport fishing seasons and depth

restrictions, will be determined under regulations promulgated by NMFS. For further information of the depth restrictions in the commercial directed halibut fishery, and the sport fisheries, call the NMFS hotline (1-800-662-9825).

After reviewing staff information and proposals from the harvesting and processing sector, the Commission approved a season opening date of March 12 for the U.S. and Canadian Individual Quota fisheries, and Treaty tribal fisheries in Area 2A. The Saturday opening date is to facilitate marketing. Therefore, seasons will commence at 12 noon local time on March 12 and terminate at 12 noon local time on November 18, 2011 for the following fisheries and areas: the Canadian Individual Vessel Quota (IVQ) fishery in Area 2B, and the United States IFQ and CDQ fisheries in Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E. All Area 2A commercial fishing including the treaty Indian commercial fishery will fall within March 12 – November 18, 2011.

Regulatory Changes and Issues

The Commission approved the staff recommendation eliminating the use of LORAN-C coordinates as a position option in fishing logbooks, as the LORAN system has been decommissioned.

Control of Charter Harvest in Area 2C

The catch of halibut in sport fisheries and the enforcement of domestic allocation limits, particularly for charter vessels, were discussed at length. The Commission recognizes that U.S. agencies wish to adhere to domestic allocation limits but effective controls remain to be implemented through a Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) in 2012. Noting that the CSP for Area 2C fisheries is not yet approved, the Commission recommends regulatory action designed to restrict charter harvest of halibut in Area 2C to the Guideline Harvest Level approved by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. The Commission recommends continuation of a one-fish daily bag limit with an additional restriction that the retained fish must be no larger than 37 inches (total length) and a requirement to retain the frame until landing, if halibut are legally filleted at sea.

The Commission received a number of regulatory and catch limit proposals after the deadlines for submission and did not consider these proposals. Participants are reminded that future proposals should be received by Commission deadlines if they are to be considered by the Commission and its advisory bodies

Commission staff was directed to review the potential for the use of tags as an accounting tool, by area and fishery, for all non-commercial removals of halibut. If this measure is considered feasible, staff will develop a regulatory proposal for consideration at the Commission's 2012 annual meeting.

The Commission also directed its staff to analyze the biological impacts of incrementally reducing or eliminating the current minimum commercial size limit of 32 inches, and provide the analysis for the Commission's 2012 Annual Meeting.

Other Actions

Halibut Bycatch Project Team

The Commission and its advisory boards discussed halibut bycatch management and received a report from its Halibut Bycatch Work Group. The Commission remains concerned about the yield lost to the halibut fishery as a result of bycatch mortality in other fisheries. Accordingly, the Commission established a Halibut Bycatch Project Team, led by a Commissioner from each country, to gain better understanding of the amounts and potential impacts of halibut bycatch mortality in other fisheries. Further, this Team will explore whether options for reducing this bycatch mortality can be implemented and whether mitigating the impacts of bycatch mortality in one area on the available harvest in other areas is possible.

Performance Review
The United States and Canada share the view of the continued importance of the Convention and seek to build upon the success of this international arrangement, and its continued relevance and effectiveness. In recent years, many such international organizations have undertaken reviews of their performance in relation to the goals of their conventions. The two governments wish to undertake a similar review over the next year. The review will assess the performance of the Commission against the goals set out by the Convention, using a team of external experts in fisheries science and international governance. The team will review stock trends and current stock status in reference to relevant reference points and assess the extent to which the Convention's central objective is being met. In addition, the team will review the Commission's governance and advisory processes to determine whether these processes are adequate to advance the objectives of the Commission. The team will also attend the 2012 Annual Meeting, for the purpose of contacting advisory bodies. The team will provide a report to the Commission in the spring of 2012.

IPHC Merit Scholarship
The Commission honoured Ms. Candace Schaack of Cold Bay, AK as the ninth recipient of the IPHC Merit Scholarship. She was unable to attend the meeting due to class requirements but was previously presented with the scholarship of $2,000 (U.S.). The Commissioners expressed their continued support for the scholarship program and commended the Scholarship Committee for their efforts in assessing the candidates.

The recommended regulations for the 2011 halibut fishery will become official as soon as they are approved by the Canadian and United States governments. The Commission will publish and distribute regulation pamphlets.

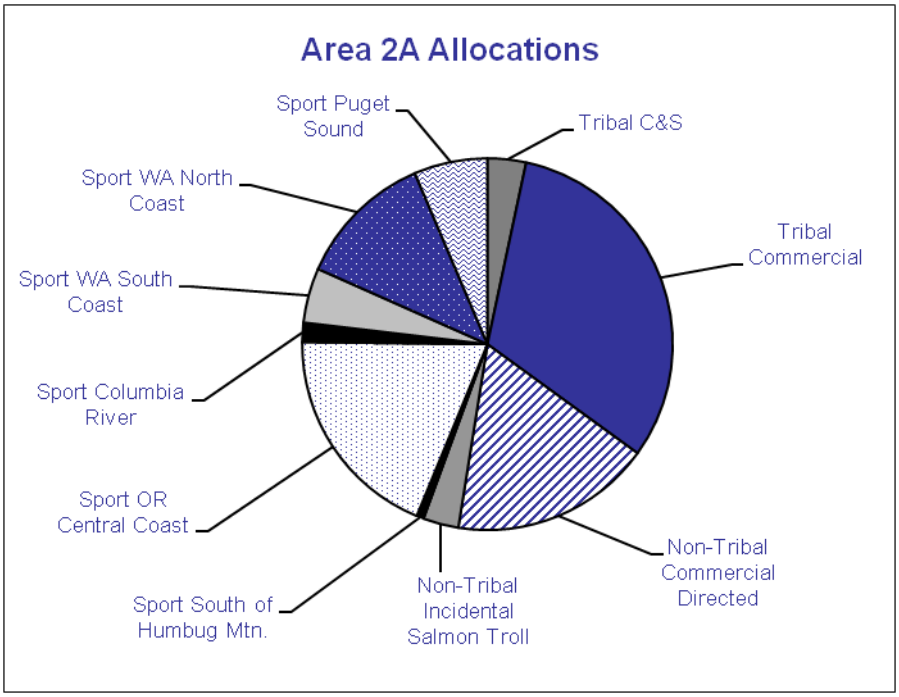
The next Annual Meeting of the Commission is planned for Anchorage, AK from January 24-27, 2012. The United States Government Commissioner, Dr. James W. Balsiger, of Juneau AK, was elected Chair. The Canadian Government Commissioner, Dr. Laura J. Richards, of Nanaimo B.C., was elected Vice-Chair for the coming year. Other Canadian Commissioners are Gary Robinson and Acting Commissioner Paul MacGillivray (Vancouver, B.C.). The other United States Commissioners are Ralph Hoard (Seattle, WA) and Phillip Lestenkof (St. Paul, AK). Dr. Bruce M. Leaman is the Executive Director of the Commission.

- END -

Bruce M. Leaman, Executive Director
Phone: (206) 634-1838
FAX: (206) 632-2983
Web: www.iphc.int

2011 AREA 2A PACIFIC HALIBUT ALLOCATIONS

Fishery	
Tribal Ceremonial and Subsistence	30,428
Tribal Commercial	288,072
Non-Tribal Commercial Directed	159,380
Non-Tribal Incidental Salmon Troll	28,126
Non-Tribal Incidental Sablefish Longline	0
Sport South of Humbug Mountain	5,625
Sport Oregon Central Coast	172,505
Sport Columbia River	15,418
Sport Washington South Coast	43,500
Sport Washington North Coast	108,792
Sport Puget Sound	58,155
Total	910,000



SUMMARY OF INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION MEETING

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) held their annual meeting the week of January 24, 2011, in Victoria, British Columbia. The meeting was attended by Area 2A managers, including representatives from the Council, Tribes, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Washington and Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife and 2A commercial harvesters, processors, and recreational interests.

Prior to the annual meeting, IPHC staff developed recommended quotas for all regulatory areas using the coastwide assessment and apportionment methodology, which produced a preliminary quota for Area 2A of 860,000 lbs and a coastwide quota of 41.02 million lbs. However, at the annual meeting, this recommendation was revised to 910,000 lbs for 2A as a result of a bycatch calculation error, and a total coastwide quota of 41.07 million lbs as the quotas for other areas were adjusted due to a combination of other factors.

In addition, there were a couple of key policy level changes that were adopted by IPHC this year that affected the quotas, which are described below.

Adjustment Factors

IPHC once again applied adjustment factors in the 2010 stock assessment in the apportionment calculations to account for the timing of the fishery relative to the timing of the survey and the competition of other species for survey baits. The application of both of these factors influenced the 2A constant exploitation yield (CEY) in a positive direction.

Slow Up, Fast Down vs. Slow Up, Full Down

For the past several years, IPHC has applied a harvest policy whereby management areas with a CEY reflecting an increase from the previous year are able to realize one-third of that increase (i.e., slow up), and areas with a decline in yield take one-half of the reduction in the first year (i.e., fast down). However, IPHC staff determined that the "fast down" portion of the policy was not sufficient to recover portions of the stock, particularly when the decline was considerable, and recommended a "full down" during the first year (i.e., 100% of the decrease, rather than only 50%). This policy change was adopted by the Commissioners. As 2A experienced an increase in the CEY from 2010, the "slow up" portion of the policy was applied for 2011.

Other Removals (Bycatch) and Harvest Rate

"Other removals" is the term IPHC uses to refer to the bycatch of halibut; in Area 2A, this includes bycatch in groundfish trawl and fixed gear fisheries. Another policy change was the accounting of bycatch relative to the size of the fish; previously, only legal-sized fish, that is halibut with a length of 32 inches or higher, were used in the bycatch calculation. However, given the reduction in the size-at-age across the halibut population in recent years, smaller halibut (i.e., around 26 inches) are older than presumed. As such, IPHC staff recommended and Commission adopted, accounting for fish between 26 and 32 inches in the "other removals" category. With the inclusion of these additional fish, the target harvest rate in Area 2A increased from 20% to 21.5%.

Bycatch Amount for 2A

Through 2010, IPHC staff calculated the "other removals" by summing the estimated trawl and fixed gear bycatch from the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) report for the previous fishing year (2009). This amount was used both in the stock assessment in calculating total removals for Area 2A for the assessment year, and as the amount subtracted off the top of the total CEY to produce the fishery CEY, or quota, for the following year.

Through the Council's actions for Amendments 20 and 21, we recommended that IPHC continue to use the value in the NWFSC report for the assessment, but then to use the amount of the trawl bycatch set aside (i.e., 130,000 lbs of legal-sized, net weight) to produce the fishery CEY for 2011. This was communicated to IPHC in November, and the Commissioners agreed to this approach at their Interim Meeting on November 30, 2010. However, in calculating the preliminary staff recommendation of 860,000 lbs for 2A, IPHC staff had continued to use the old method for the bycatch of fish between 26 and 32 inches. This error was discovered at the IPHC meeting and a correction was made, which increased the 2A quota to 910,000 lbs.

Area 2A Survey Expansion – Pilot Program

Finally, Area 2A halibut managers (13 Treaty Tribes that harvest halibut and the Washington and Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife) submitted a letter to IPHC regarding the proposed expansion of the halibut longline survey in 2A. There were two options for a pilot project for the 2A survey for 2011—essentially the halibut managers favored one option, which we think will reduce the uncertainty in the survey estimates of abundance and better addresses the patchy distribution of the halibut off the West Coast, and IPHC staff favor the other option, which could reduce the uncertainty, but does not address the distribution. Despite our comments, it is my understanding that IPHC supported the staff's recommendation. Both approaches include adding survey stations within Puget Sound, which had previously been excluded. The intent is to improve the survey beginning with this pilot in 2A, and then expand the pilot approach to other management areas potentially in 2013, pending available funding.

Bycatch

The Commissioners received a preliminary report from the Halibut Bycatch Work Group (HBWG) on the status of bycatch in all coastwide management areas, and recent and proposed actions taken by the North Pacific and Pacific Councils and Canada to reduce bycatch. It was decided that the HBWG had likely gone as far as it could in providing the background information on bycatch, and that broader bycatch issues remain which need policy direction to address.

In response, the Commission established a Halibut Bycatch Project Team, led by a Commissioner from each country, to gain a better understanding of the amounts and potential impacts of halibut bycatch mortality in other fisheries. This Team will also explore whether options for reducing this bycatch mortality can be implemented and whether mitigating the impacts of bycatch mortality in one area on the available harvest in other areas is possible.

The Pacific Council, in particular, received kudos for its adoption of the trawl rationalization program and the inclusion of the halibut individual bycatch quotas. I would recommend that the Pacific Council continue to stay engaged in these IPHC halibut bycatch discussions.

Agenda Item F.1.c
Supplemental GAP Report
March 2011

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON ON THE INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION MEETING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report on the annual International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) meeting and a briefing on the proposed expanded survey proposal for area 2A. The GAP expresses the following concerns with the expanded survey proposal:

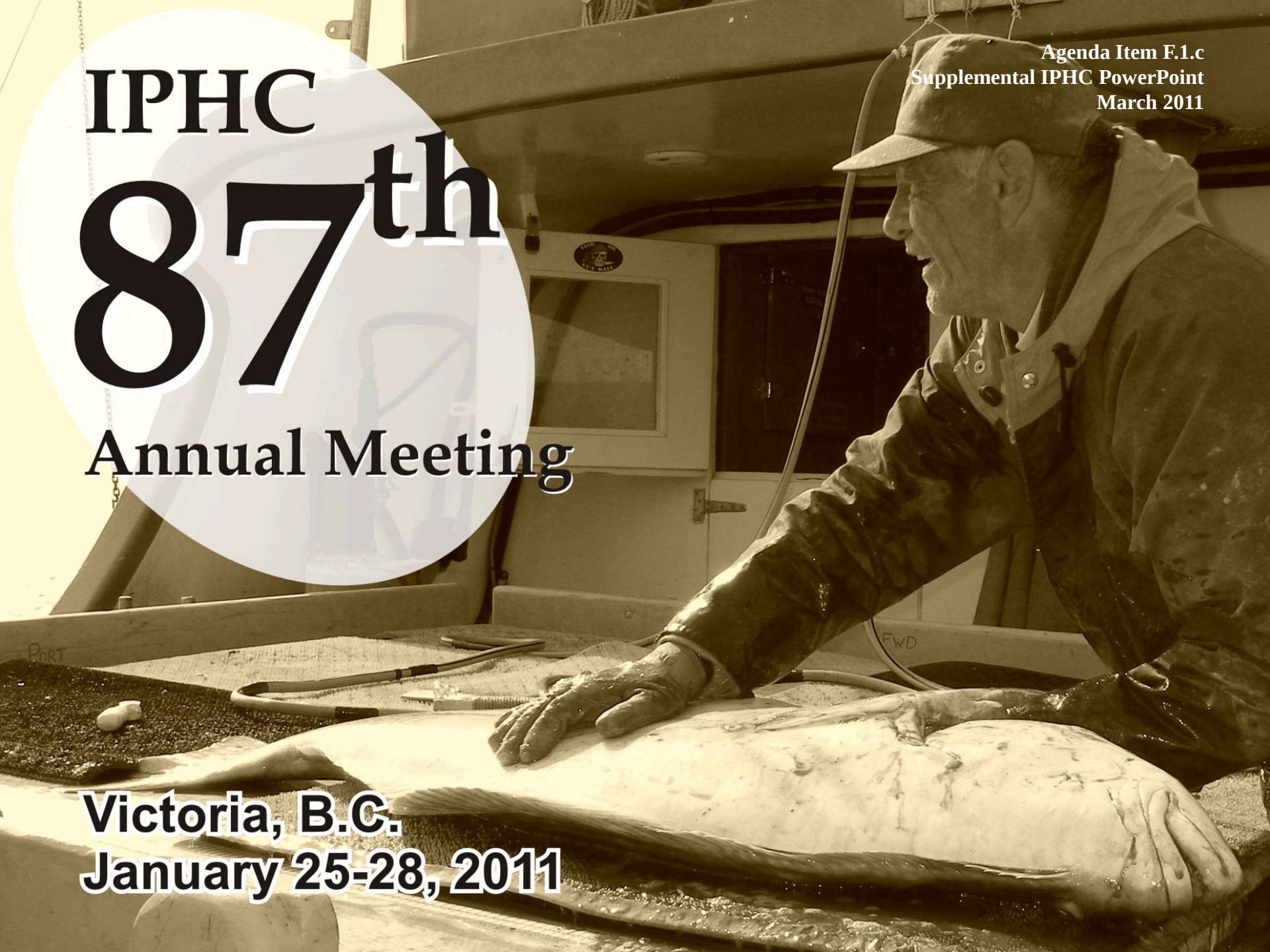
1. The sites at 400 fathoms will likely produce little new resource information during a summer survey in area 2A as the halibut are found much shallower than this. This is outside their habitat area during the summer months.

2. The GAP believes that a modified survey that would include sites based on a five mile grid rather than a 10 mile grid would provide a better sampling of area 2A. Due to the patchy dispersion of halibut in area 2A this change would be a better index of halibut abundance.

PFMC
03/05/11

Agenda Item F.1.c
Supplemental IPHC PowerPoint
March 2011

IPHC 87th Annual Meeting



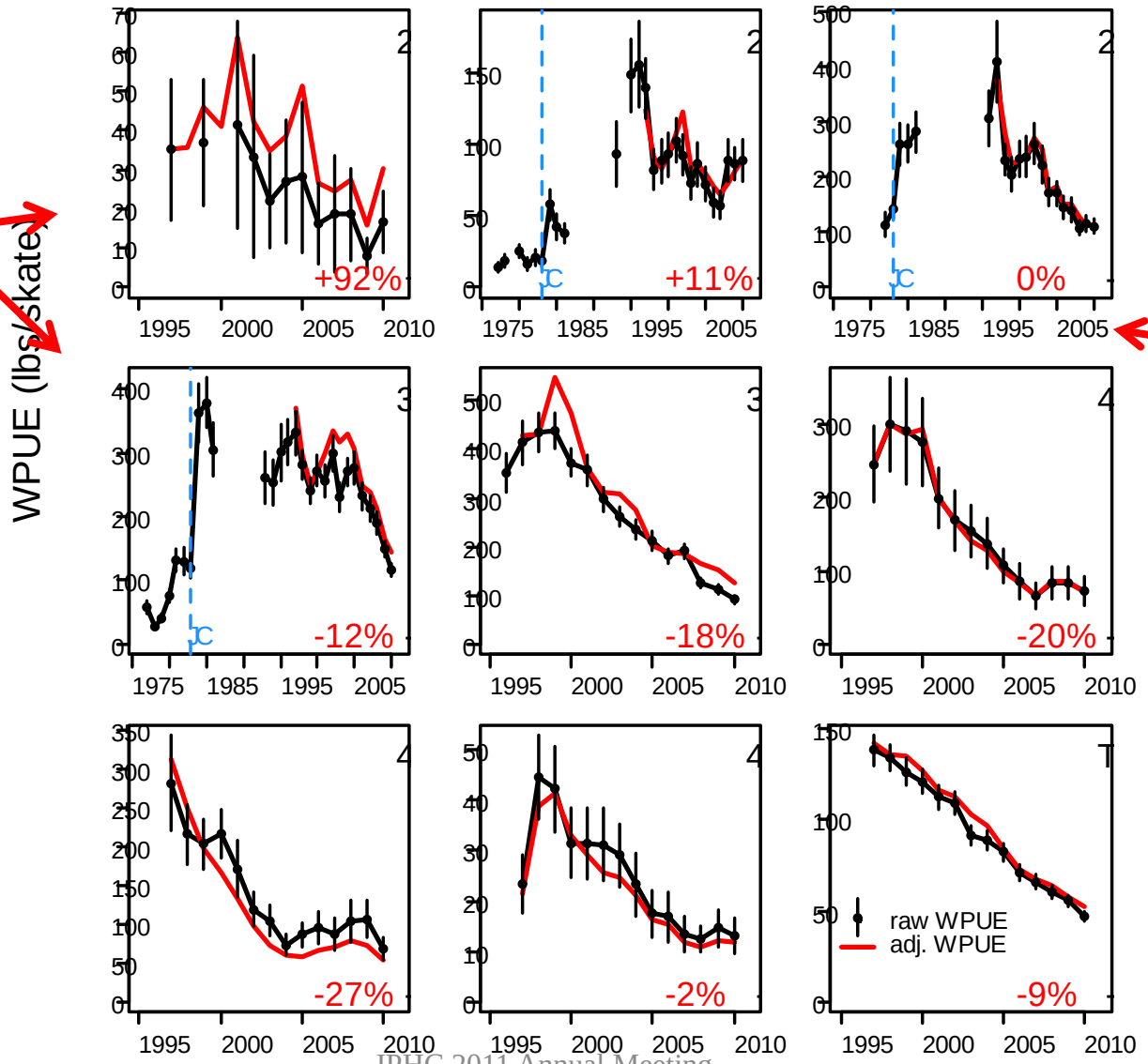
Victoria, B.C.
January 25-28, 2011

Recommended Catch Limit Considerations

- Commission's desire to achieve target harvest rates in all areas
- Declining indices of abundance
- Recent high exploitation rates in Area 2
- Declining size at age and effect on Ebio
- Addressing inconsistencies in treatment of U32/O26 removals among different categories of removals. Options for direct deductions of both U32/O26 and U26 removals examined

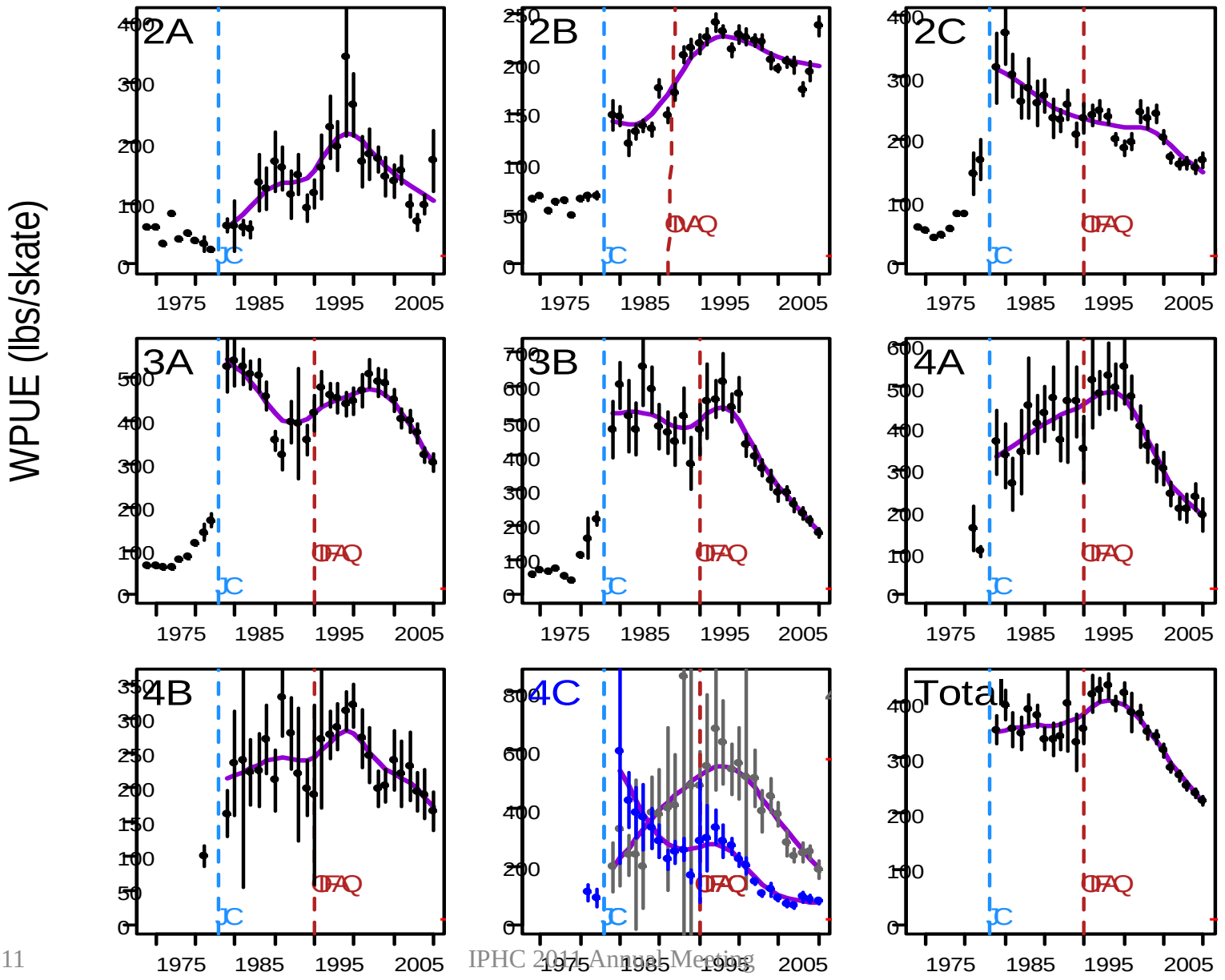
Raw and Adjusted Survey WPUE (O32)

Note the different vertical scales for each area

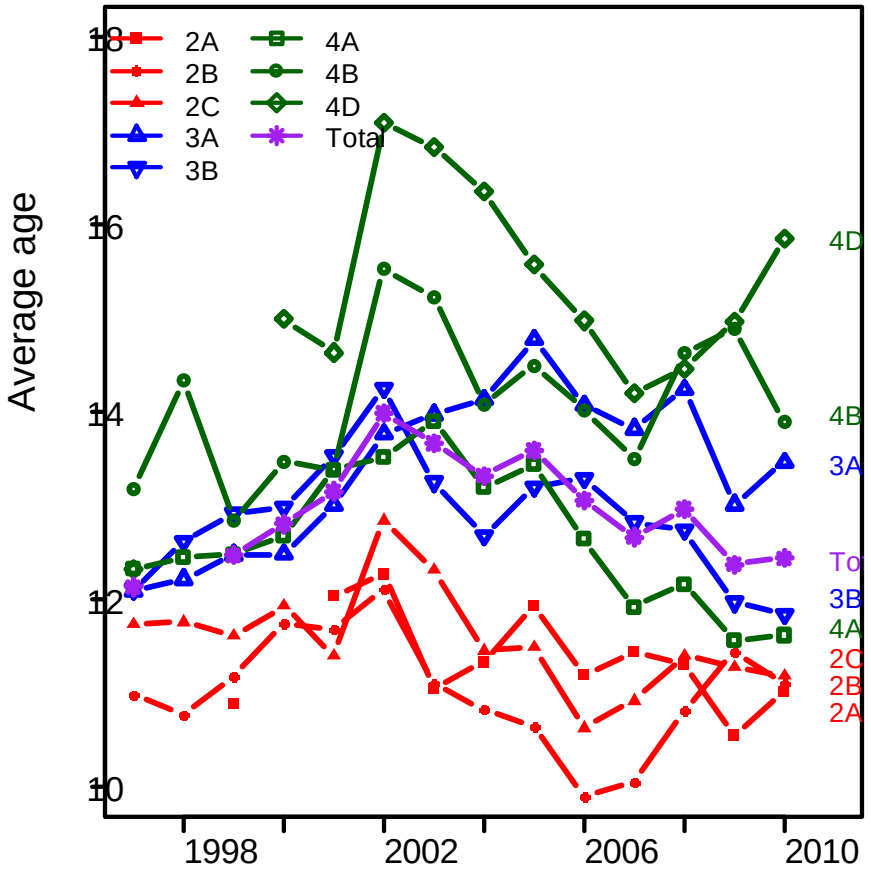


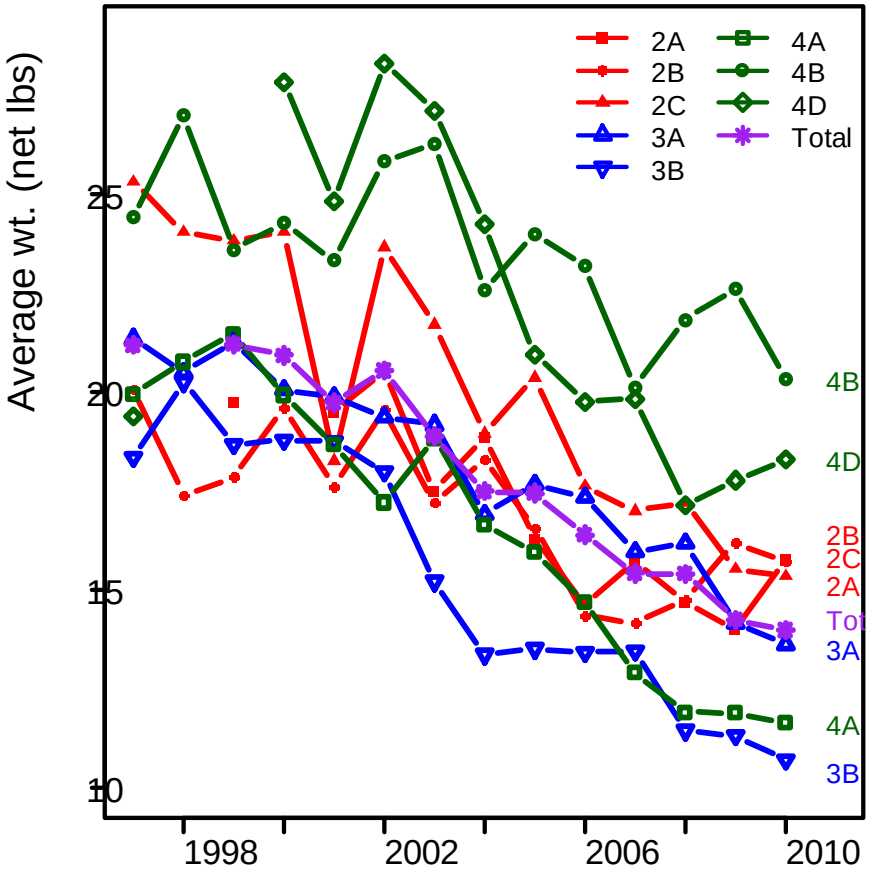
Note the different timeline for Areas 2B, 2C, 3A

Commercial WPUE, 1974-2010



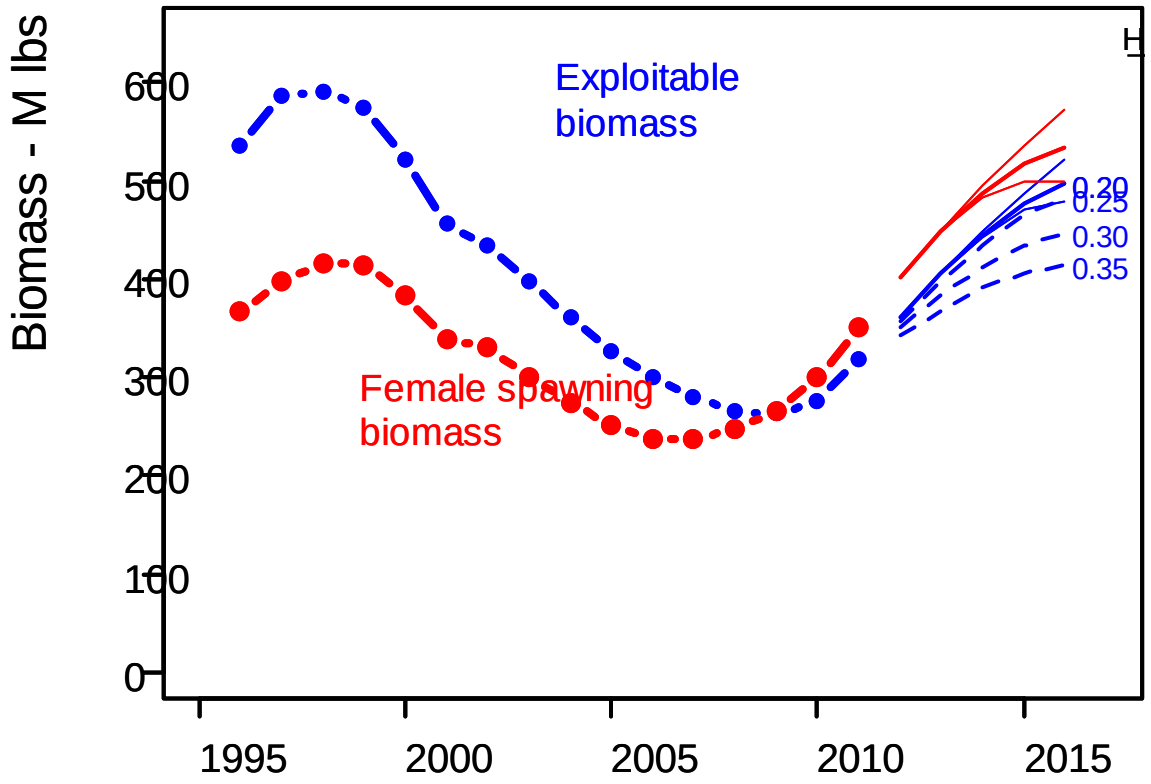
Reg area age and weight trends (survey)





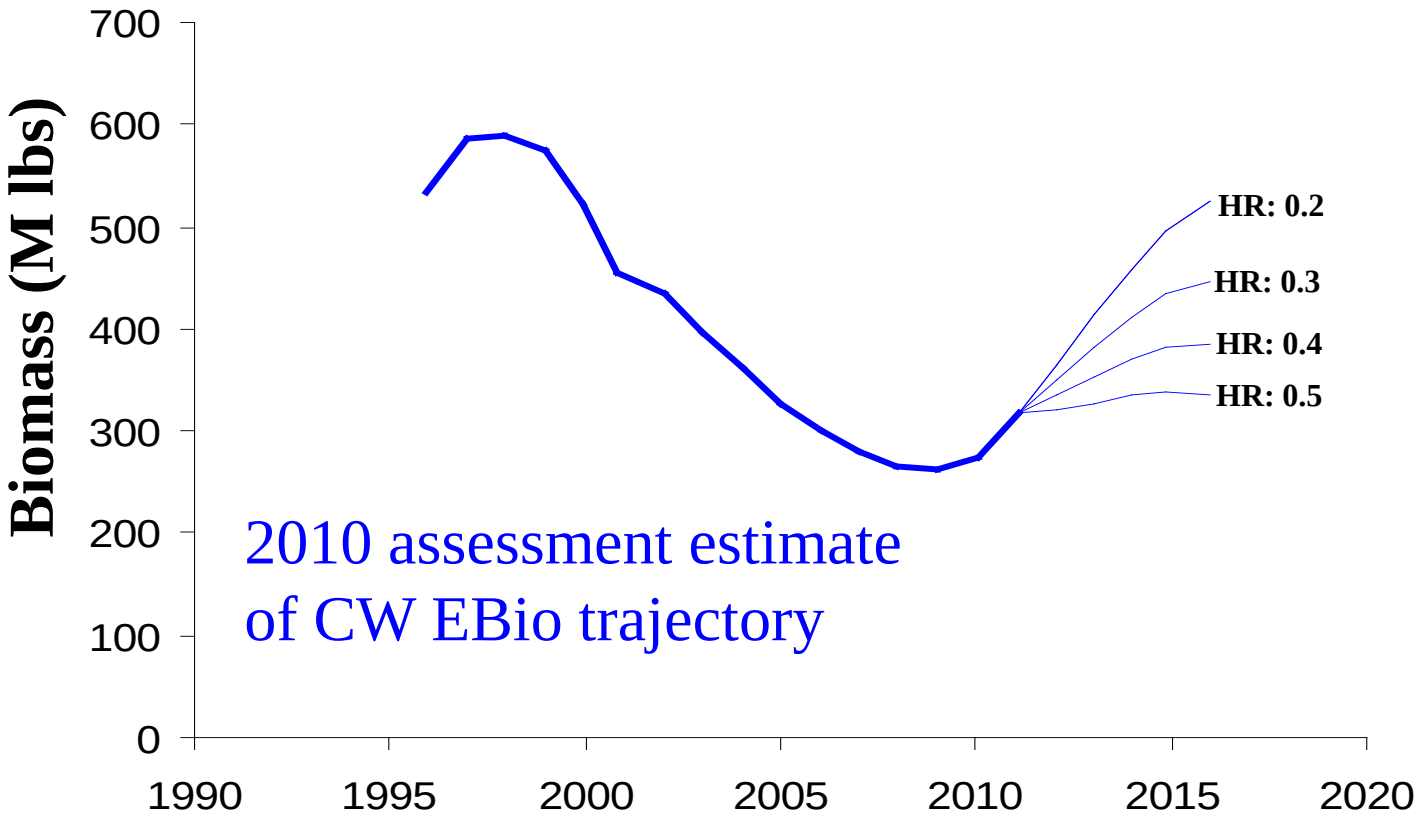
Ebio projections - Coastwide

- Cautionary notes on projections
  - Based on current estimated population structure
  - Assumes no change in size-at-age
  - Assumes near average recruitment
  - Assumes removals will be at target HR of 0.20.

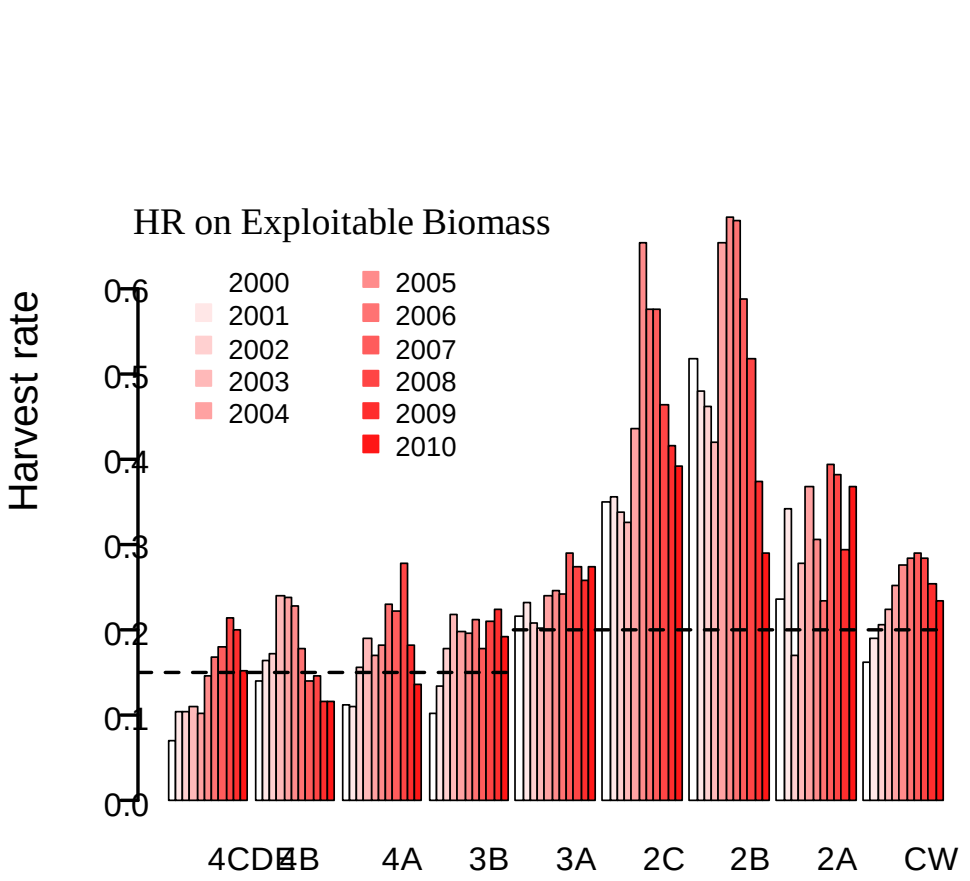


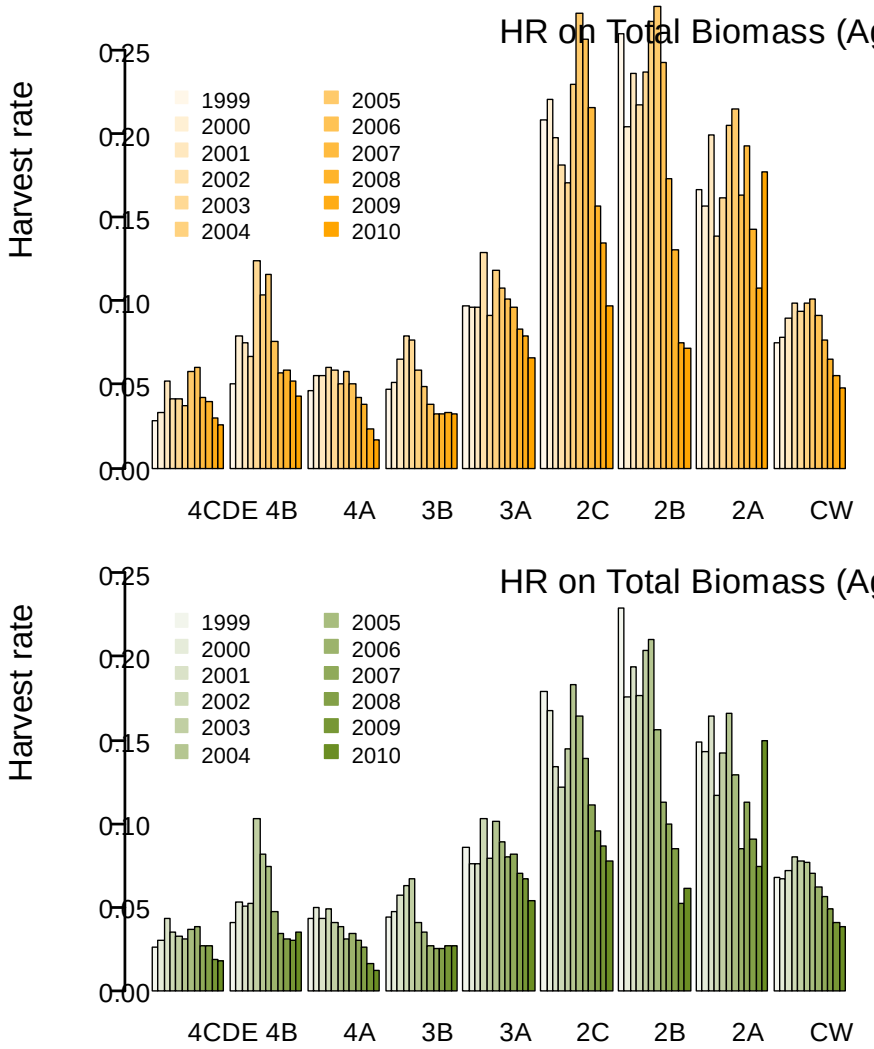
Projected CW EBio (no change in trends)

- Using Min, Avg and Max CW estimated recruitment
- Changing trends: 1) no further decreases in size-at-age
  2) no further decreases of recruitment estimates



Realized harvest rates

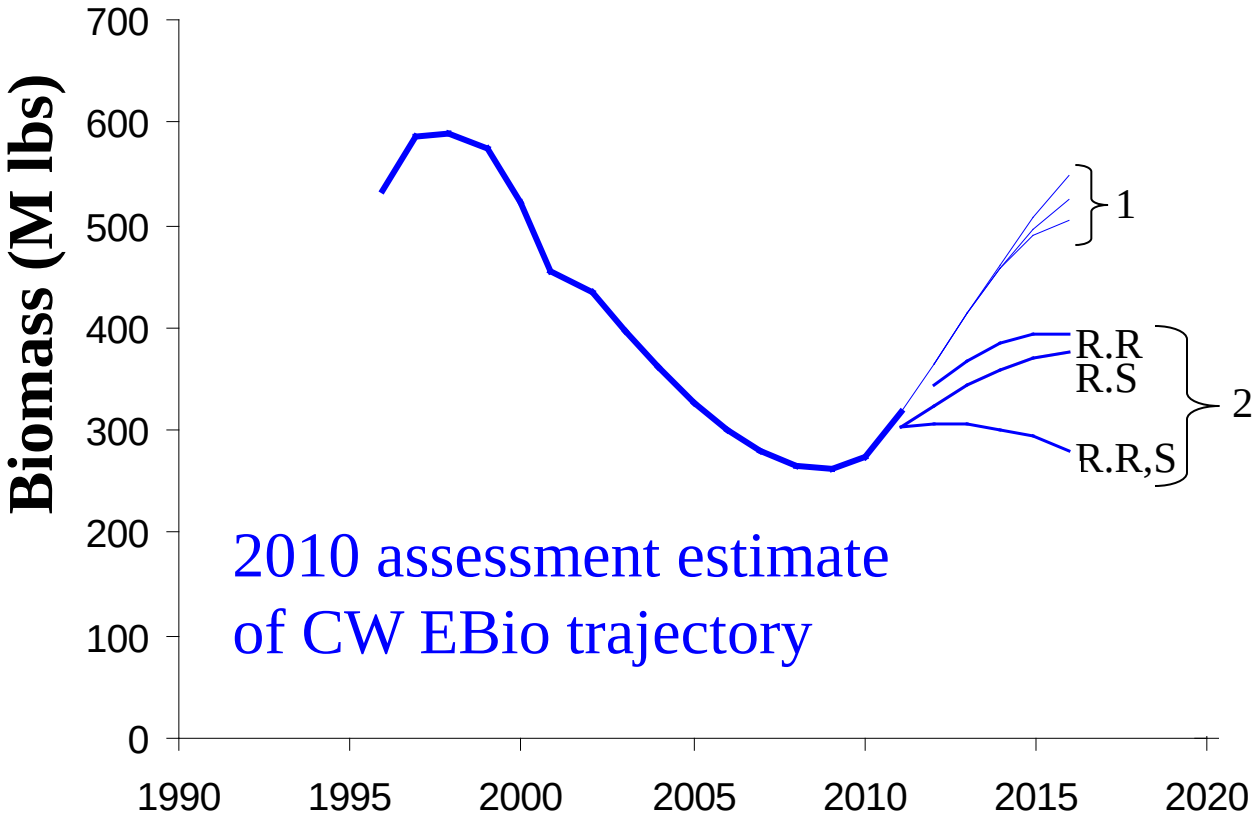




Projected CW EBio (alternative method)

1) Using Min, Avg and Max CW estimated recruitment

2) Avg Recruits, reduced rec. (R.R), reduced size-at-age (R.S) and both (R.R,S)



Apportionment Process

- Adjustment factors used same as those in 2010
  - Hook competition
  - Survey timing
- Data averaging
  - Statistical analysis used Kalman filter approach to develop 75:20:5 reverse weighting for the past three years of survey data, most recent year's data weighted highest
- Final apportionment uses adjusted, reverse-weighted WPUE, and bottom areas (0-400 fm)

Change to Slow Up Fast Down (SUFD)

- SUFastD phases in changes asymmetrically
- EBio (x HR) -> TCEY (- OR) -> FCEY (SUFastD) -> CLR
- Fishery CEY adjustment termed “Slow Up Fast Down”
  - Option to modify to Slow Up Full Down (SUFullD)
- SUFastD has resulted in Coastwide quotas 9-14% over the Fishery CEY (FCEY) the last few years
  - Individual regulatory areas have been as much as 75% over FCEY
- Analysis shows that SUFastD does not work as well under conditions of:
  - Starting from catch levels well above FCEY
  - Continuing decline in size at age

Commission Requested Analysis

- Current treatment of U32/O26 removals is not consistent across all fishery types (commercial, sport, subsistence, bycatch). Some is by direct deduction, some is by harvest rate adjustment.
- Commission requested that staff attempt to rationalize the treatment of such fish
- Staff developed method to directly deduct all such removals from Total CEY, in combination with a modified harvest rate
- Results indicate previous treatment was adequate but proposed method more apparent and consistent

Scenarios Considered

	Standard Deductions, All U32 BAWM in HR			Direct U32/O26 Deductions, All U26 BAWM in HR			Direct U32 Deductions, No U32 BAWM in HR		
Reg Area	**No SUFD**	**SUFD**	**SUFullD**	**No SUFD**	**SUFD**	**SUFullD**	**No SUFD**	**SUFD**	**SUFullD**
2A	1.13	0.92	0.92	0.95	0.91	0.91	0.97	0.92	0.92
2B	7.65	7.55	7.55	7.94	7.65	7.65	8.07	7.69	7.69
2C	2.27	3.34	2.27	2.33	3.36	2.33	2.41	3.40	2.41
3A	14.85	17.42	14.85	14.36	17.17	14.36	14.70	17.34	14.70
3B	8.08	8.99	8.08	7.51	8.70	7.51	7.47	8.69	7.47
4A	2.67	2.44	2.44	2.57	2.41	2.41	2.56	2.41	2.41
4B	2.14	2.15	2.14	2.21	2.18	2.18	2.20	2.17	2.17
4CDE	4.44	3.87	3.87	3.99	3.72	3.72	3.96	3.71	3.71
Total	43.22	46.67	42.11	41.85	46.10	41.07	42.34	46.33	41.48

Revised from initial staff recommendations

All cases use Hook/Timing Adjustment Factors and reverse weighted averaging of survey WPUEs

Staff Recommendation

	Direct U32/O26 Deductions All U26 BAWM in HR
Reg Area	SUFullD
2A	0.91
2B	7.65
2C	2.33
3A	14.36
3B	7.51
4A	2.41
4B	2.18
4CDE	3.72
Total	41.07

Recommendations based on use of Hook/Timing adjustment factors and reverse weighting of survey WPUEs

Coastwide Assessment: Hook Competition and Timing AFs, reverse averaging to Survey Apportionment, SUFullD, and Direct U32/O26 Deduction

Reg Area	Exploitable biomass	Harvest Rate	Total CEY	2010 Other Removals	2010 Catch Limit	2011 Fishery CEY	Slow Up-Full Down Adjustment	2011 Catch Limit Recomm.	
2A	6.63	21.5%	1.43	0.31	0.81	**1.11**	-0.20	**0.91**	[1,3]
2B	40.89	21.5%	8.79	0.85	7.50	**7.94**	-0.30	**7.65**	[2,3]
2C	25.05	21.5%	5.39	3.06	4.40	**2.33**	0.00	**2.33**	[4]
3A	109.39	21.5%	23.52	9.16	19.99	**14.36**	0.00	**14.36**	[4]
3B	57.32	16.1%	9.24	1.73	9.90	**7.51**	0.00	**7.51**	[4]
4A	21.25	16.1%	3.43	0.86	2.33	**2.57**	-0.16	**2.41**	[3]
4B	16.14	16.1%	2.60	0.39	2.16	**2.21**	-0.03	**2.18**	[3]
4CDE	40.32	16.1%	6.50	2.52	3.58	**3.99**	-0.27	**3.72**	[3]
Total	317.00	19.2%	60.90	18.88	50.67	**42.02**	-0.95	**41.07**	

Note:Exploitable biomass is coastwide assessment, survey partitioning; Hook & Timing Afs; Kalman wts

[1] Catch limits and Fishery CEY for 2A includes commercial, sport, and treaty subsistence catches

[2] Catch limits and Fishery CEY for 2B includes commercial and sport catch

[3] Calculated as 2010 catch limit plus 1/3 of the difference between 2011 Fishery CEY and 2010 Catch Limit

[4] Calculated as 2011 Fishery CEY

Assumes GHL of 0.788 Mlb in Area 2C, 3.65 Mlb in Area 3A under Other Removals

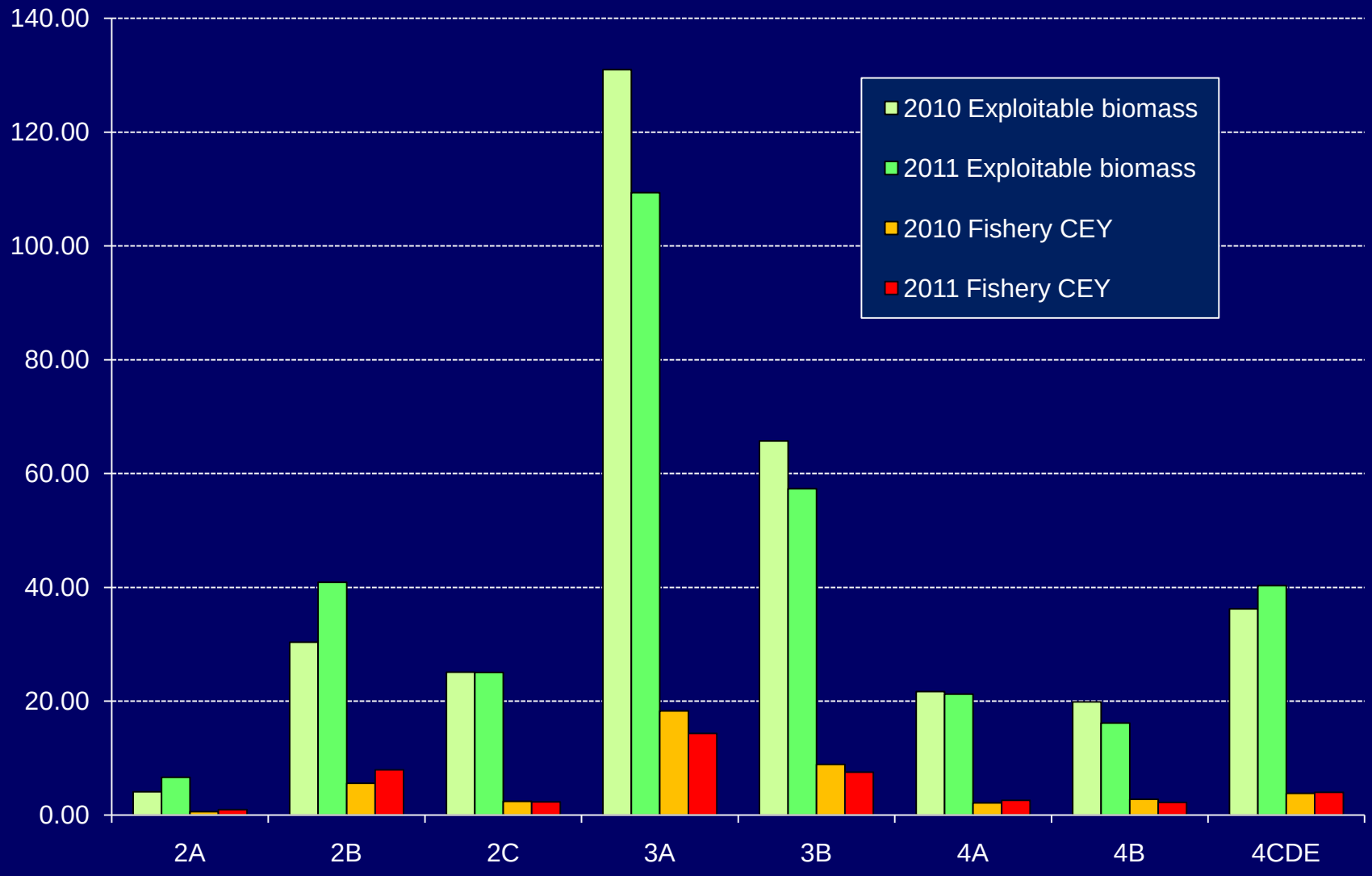
Other removals for 2C and 3A are adding projected unguided harvest to the applicable GHL

2010 vs. 2011 Comparison

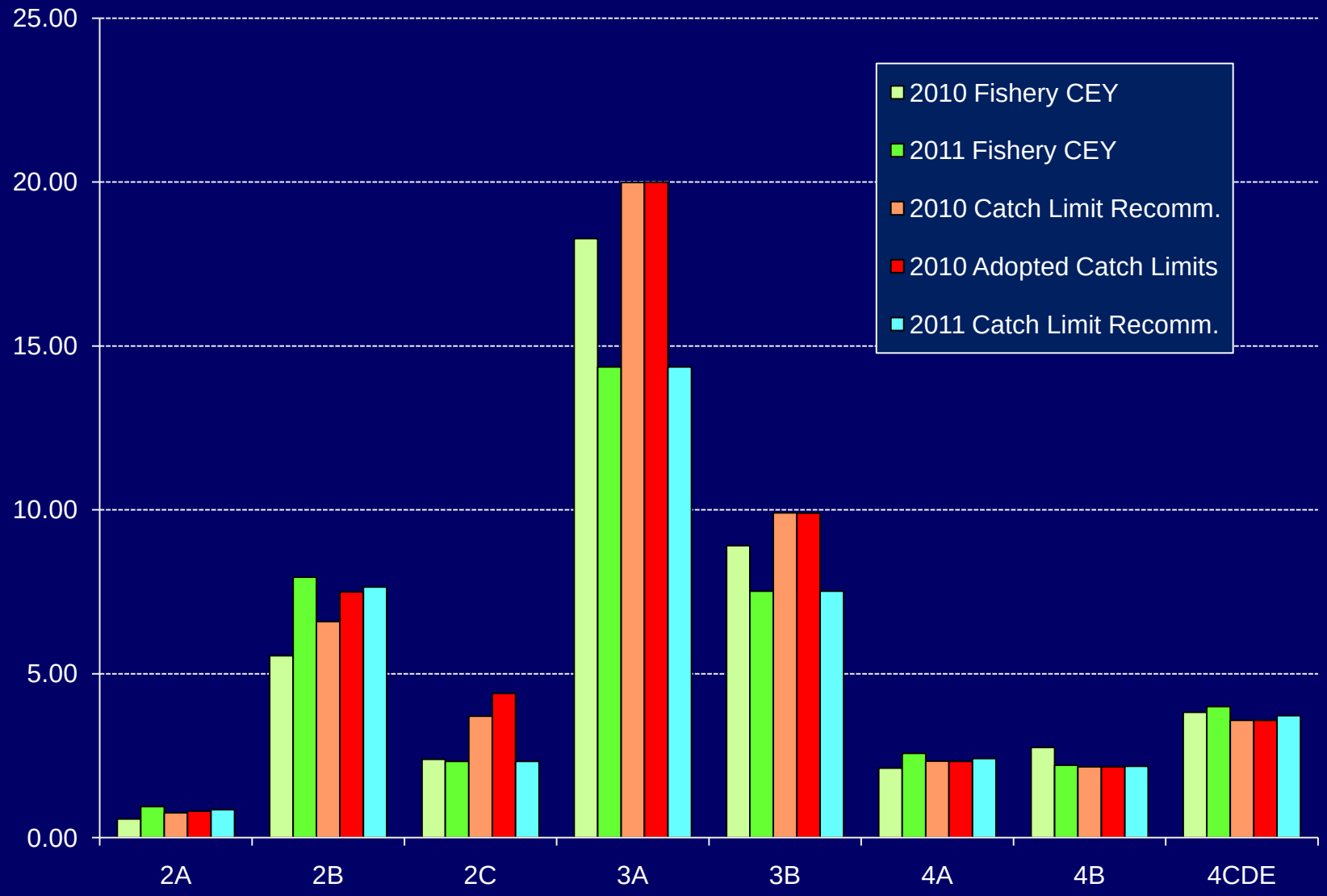
Reg Area	2010 Exploitable biomass	2011 Exploitable biomass	2010 Total CEY	2011 Total CEY	2010 Fishery CEY	2011 Fishery CEY	2010 Catch Limit Recomm	2010 Adopted Catch Limits	2011 Catch Limit Recomm
2A	4.09	6.63	0.82	1.43	0.57	1.11	0.76	0.81	0.91
2B	30.38	40.89	6.08	8.79	5.55	7.94	6.59	7.50	7.65
2C	25.10	25.05	5.02	5.39	2.39	2.33	3.71	4.40	2.33
3A	130.96	109.39	26.19	23.52	18.28	14.36	19.99	19.99	14.36
3B	65.72	57.32	9.86	9.24	8.91	7.51	9.90	9.90	7.51
4A	21.67	21.25	3.25	3.43	2.12	2.57	2.33	2.33	2.41
4B	19.86	16.14	2.98	2.60	2.75	2.21	2.16	2.16	2.18
4CDE	36.21	40.32	5.43	6.50	3.82	3.99	3.58	3.58	3.72
Total	**334.00**	**317.00**	**59.63**	**60.90**	**44.39**	**42.02**	**49.02**	**50.67**	**41.07**

Note: Ebio and FCEY values are directly comparable; TCEY uses different harvest rates in 2010 and 2011

2010 vs. 2011 Ebio and FCEY



2010 vs. 2011 FCEY and CLs



2011 Adopted Catch Limits

Regulatory Area	2010 Catch Limit	Staff (Millions of Pounds)	CB (Millions of Pounds)	PAG (Millions of Pounds)	IPHC Approved
2A [1]	0.810	0.910	0.860	0.920	0.910
2B [1,2]	7.500	7.650	7.650	7.650	7.650
2C [2]	4.400	2.330	3.360	3.110	2.330
3A [2]	19.990	14.360	14.360	14.360	14.360
3B	9.900	7.510	7.510	7.510	7.510
4A	2.330	2.410	2.410	2.410	2.410
4B	2.160	2.180	2.180	2.180	2.180
4CDE [3]	3.580	3.720	3.720	3.720	3.720
4C [4]	1.625	1.690	1.690	1.690	1.690
4D [4]	1.625	1.690	1.690	1.690	1.690
4E [4]	0.330	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340
Total	50.670	41.070	42.050	41.860	41.070

[1] Combined sport and commercial allocation (2A includes tribal)

[2] Presumes adherence to sport management targets

[3] Allocation for combined Areas 4C, 4D, 4E

[4] NPFMC Plan: 4C , 4D: 46.43% of 80K less than 4CDE quota, 4E: 7.14% + 80K

Management Recommendations

Fishing periods and catch sharing

- Staff proposes March 15 - November 15 for quota share fisheries
- Area 2A commercial and treaty Indian fisheries should fall within adopted season
- In 2A, a series of 10-h periods starting June 29 for the directed fishery
- Endorse Management Councils' catch sharing plans for Areas 2A and 4CDE
- Endorse DFO commercial:sport allocation plan for Area 2B

Regulatory Proposals

From Commission staff

- Changing logbook regulation to remove the option for use of LORAN coordinates for fishing locations, due to decommissioning of the LORAN-C network

Direction to Staff

- Analyze potential for using tags as a monitoring tool for non-commercial removals of halibut
- Analyze biological impacts of incrementally reducing or eliminating the commercial size limit

Alaskan Charter Fishery Control Measures Requested by the Commission

- At 2010 Annual Meeting, Commission requested staff development of potential control measures for charter halibut fisheries, should the NPFMC Catch Sharing Plan not be implemented in a timely manner
- Measures considered by the Commission and Advisory bodies at Annual Meeting. Measures in IPHC Blue Book, Appendix I, pp. 156-164
- Staff worked with NMFS to develop a suite of potential control measures, based largely on existing analyses

Charter Control Options

Objectives

- Meet IPHC conservation goals
- Reduce harvest to GHL
- Minimize season disruption to the extent practicable
- Assure equity of access and applicability to all charter anglers
- Ensure measures result in enforceable accountability
- Simplify application by basing measures on previous analyses where possible

Charter Control Options

Potential Measures

- Existing Catch Sharing Plan measures
- Maximum size limit
- Season limitation

Longer term measure

- Restricted number of halibut tags, with licence and logbook recording

Commission Adopted

- One-fish bag limit, maximum size 37 in., carcass retention until offloading

Bycatch Mortality

- Commission notes Council's letter of 12/27/2010 concerning PSCs and affirms participation in the Council process
- Building on activities of Halibut Bycatch Work Group re-formed in 2010, the Commission has formed a Halibut Bycatch Project Team, led by Commissioners
- Gain better understanding of amounts and impacts, as well as potential control and mitigation measures
- Report to the Commission at its 2012 Annual Meeting and liaise with NPFMC

Performance Review

- Using a team of external experts in fisheries science, management, and organizational governance, the Commission will conduct a review of its performance relative to the central objectives of the Halibut Convention
- Will review trends and stock status with regard to relevant reference points, as well as governance and advisory processes relative to advancing the goals of the Commission
- Team will attend the 2012 Annual Meeting to interact with the Commission's Advisory Bodies and assess decision-making procedures
- Report to the Commission prior to the 2012 Interim Meeting

Expanding the IPHC setline survey

Ray Webster, Steven Hare, Bruce Leaman & Claude Dykstra

Halibut beyond survey depths

- Currently, IPHC survey stations are located on a 10 nmi grid within the depth range of 20-275 fathoms (with a few exceptions).
- Halibut occur at shallower depths, and down to at least 400 fathoms in some areas.
  - Commercial fishing takes a significant fraction of catch at depths greater than 275 fathoms in Area 4.
  - Several areas have high proportions of commercial catch at shallow depths.

Proportion of commercial catch > 275 fathoms

Proportion of commercial catch <20 fathoms

Proportion of commercial catch <20 fathoms

Halibut outside of survey depths

- Commercial catch data show that halibut can inhabit greater and shallower depths than the survey samples.
  - This is true during the period of the survey.
- The data imply that survey WPUE may be biased:
  - WPUE in 0-20 and 275-400 fathoms is assumed to be the same as WPUE in 20-275 fathoms.

Expanding the setline survey

- Any depth expansion should be done consistently across areas:
  - Our goal is to survey Ebio: the quantity of commercial catch is not relevant, and we only need to know that halibut can be present at unsurveyed depths.
  - Halibut are highly mobile, so fish present at any given time in areas with no fishing are still part of Ebio.

Logistical issues

- Not all potential new stations will be fishable:
  - Shipping channels
  - Dangerous currents
  - Restrictions (e.g., sea lions, rockfish)
- Cost of survey expansion will be considerable.
  - Possibly additional $1.4M.

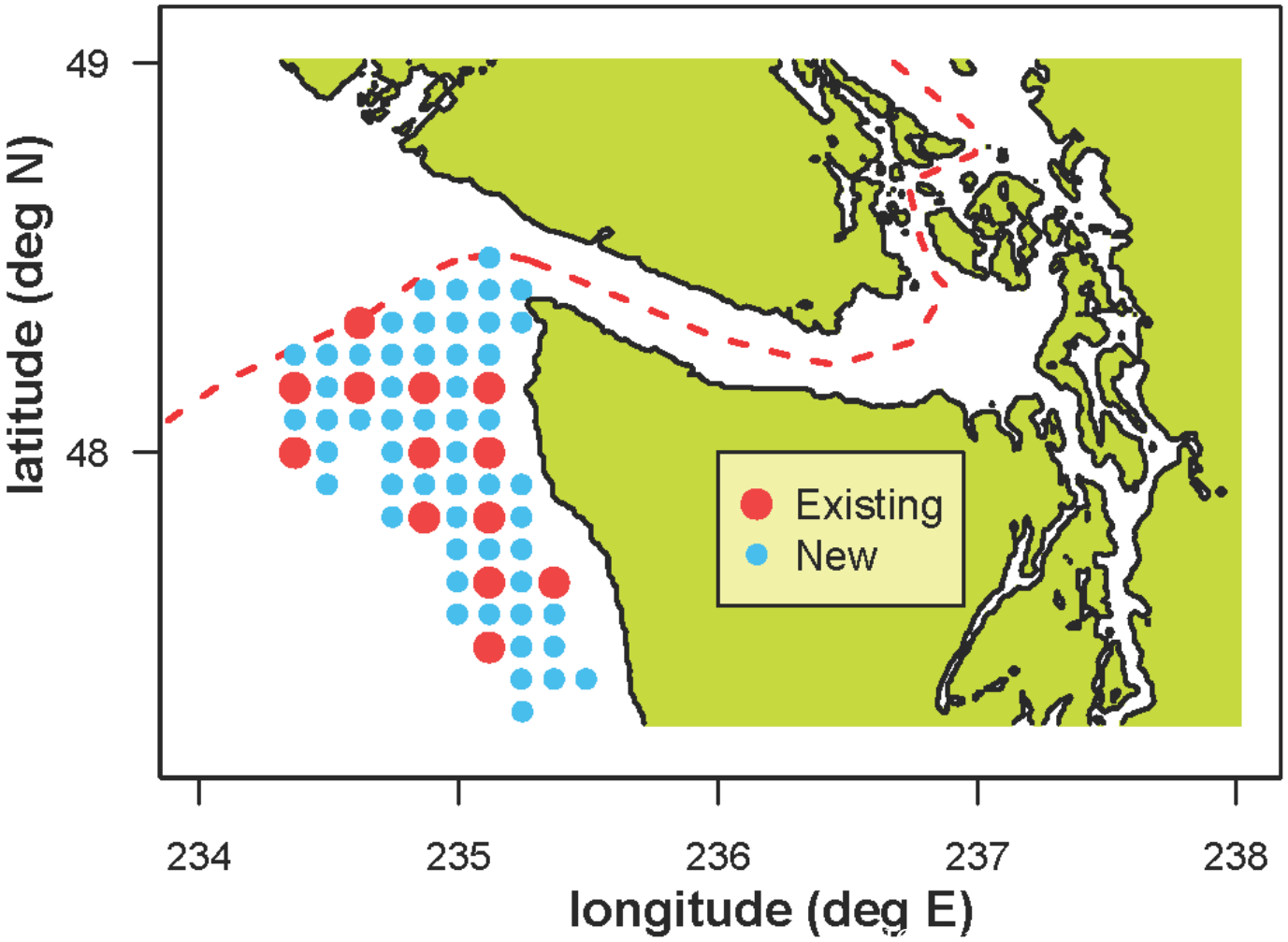
Special consideration: Area 2A

- The only regulatory area with the CV of WPUE greater than 20%
- Area 2A's WPUE estimate is imprecise:
  - Important implications for apportionment.
- Survey expansion will lower CV, while also reducing bias.
- New stations may not be sufficient to bring CV down to the level of other areas.

Denser survey in Statistical Area 50

- Area 50 is the IPHC statistical area immediately south of the Canada-US border.
- In recent years, it has had the highest survey WPUE and the greatest variability.
- A 5 nmile grid in Area 50 is expected to bring down Area 2A's CV to under 20% without a depth or range expansion of the 10 nmile grid.
- Could lead to as many as 54 new stations in statistical area 50.

Stat area 50 with 5 nmile station grid



Denser survey in statistical area 50

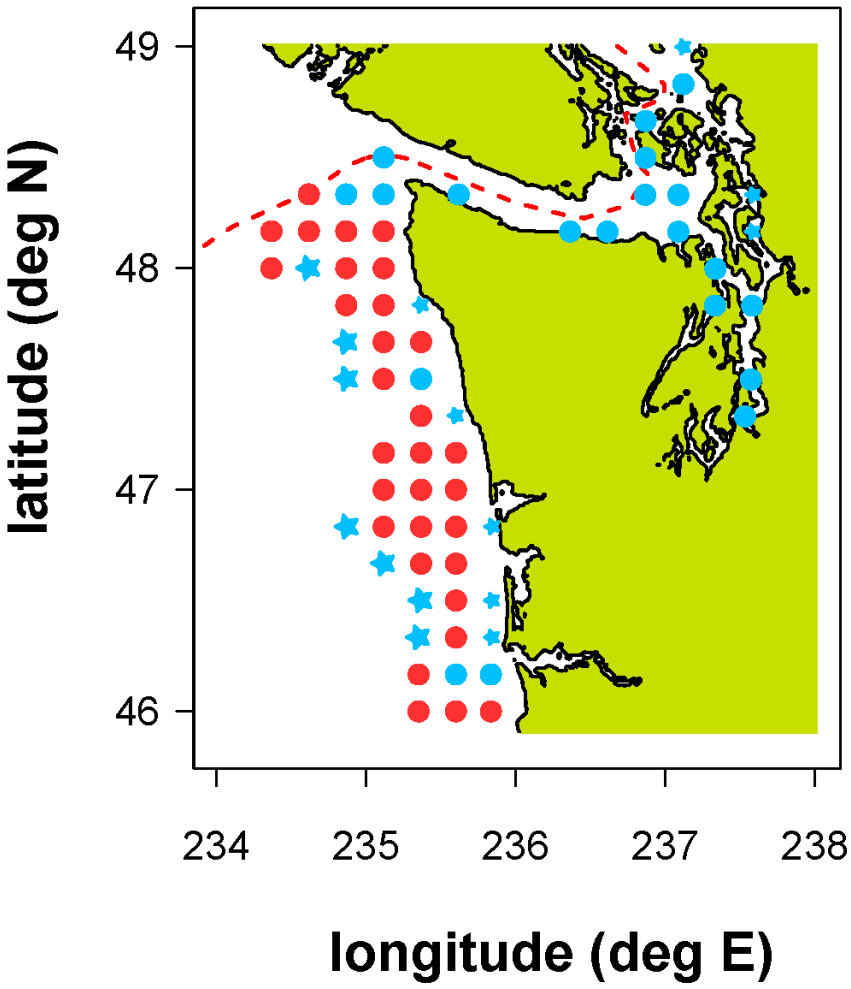
- As with the expanded survey, the cost of adding new stations will be significant:
  - Catch rates are already low, and the Area 2A survey is currently operating at a loss.
- There are concerns over increased yelloweye rockfish impacts:
  - IPHC survey may be subject to restrictions on yelloweye catch.

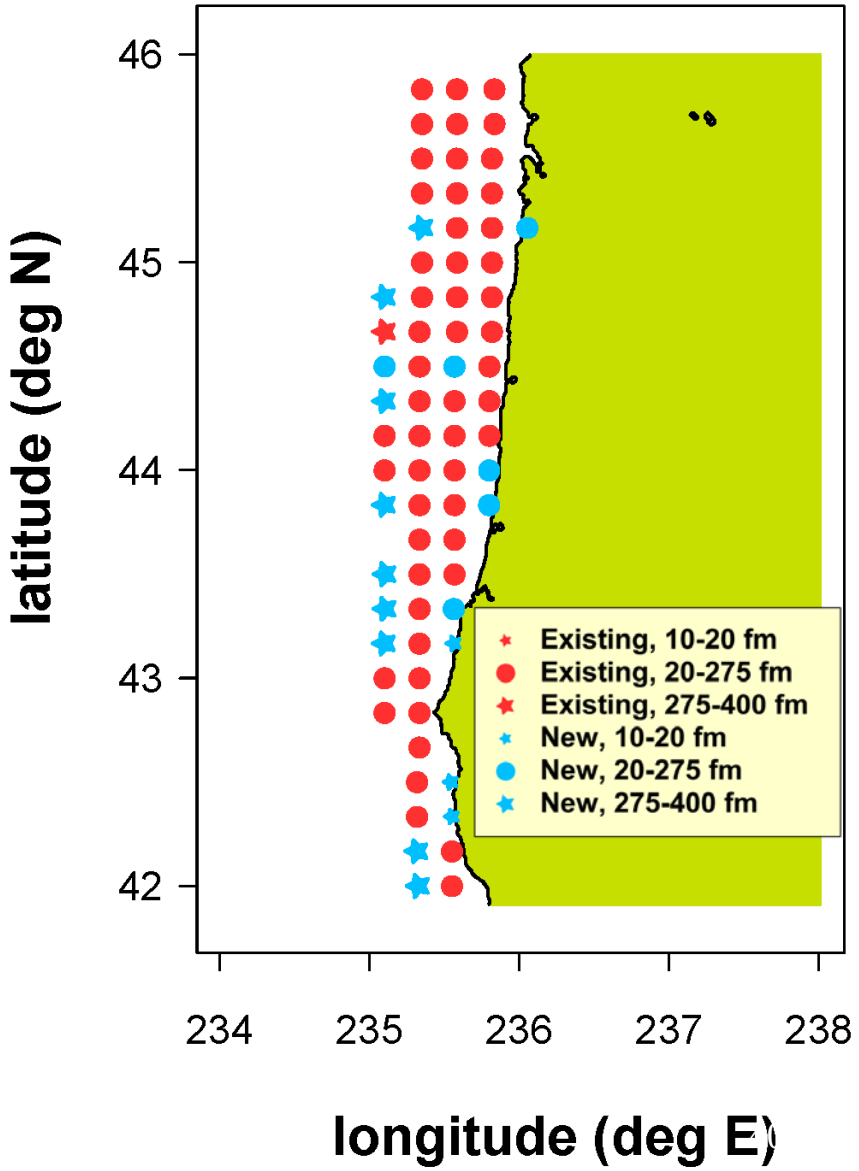
Expanded survey pilot in Area 2A

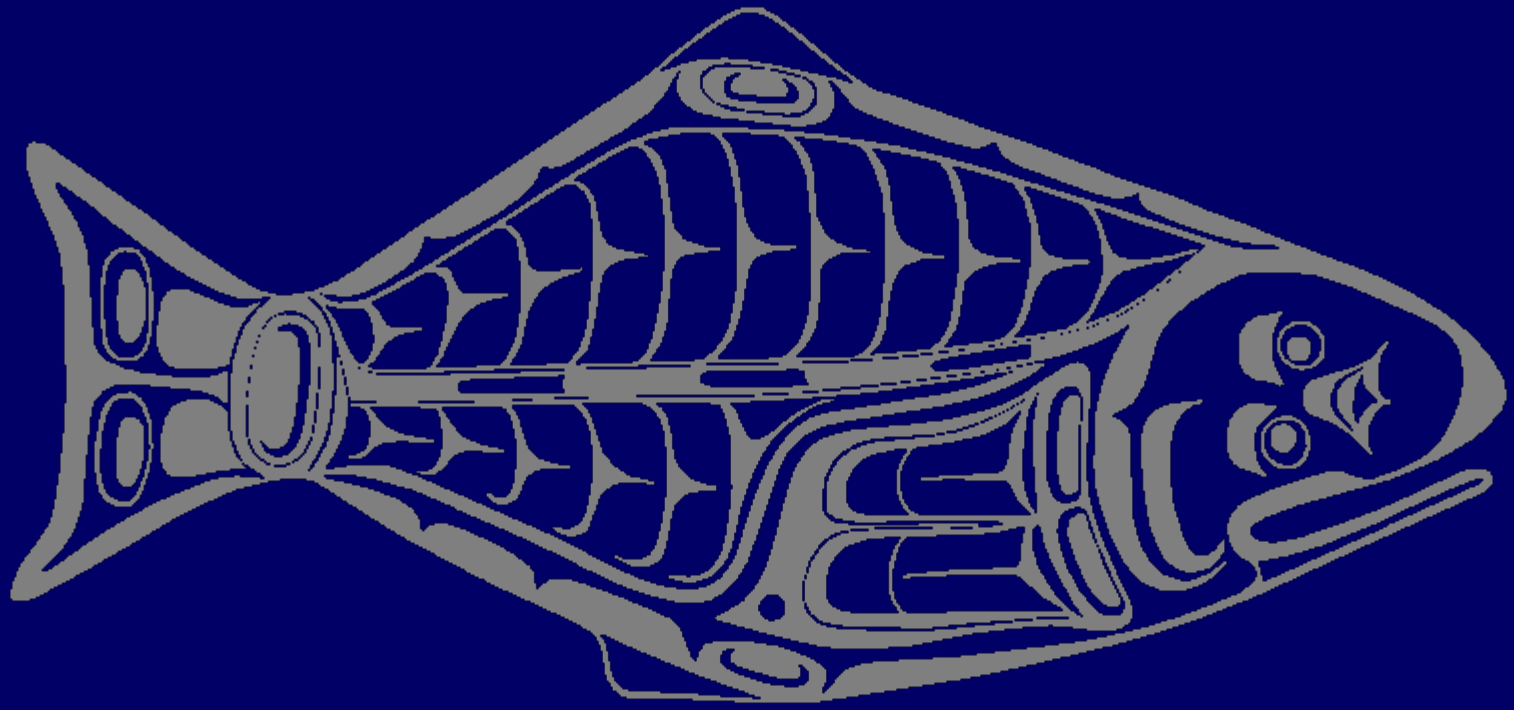
- IPHC staff has proposed a pilot project of the depth and range expansion in Area 2A for 2011.
- This was preferred over the denser Area 50 option:
  - Addresses bias as well as precision concerns.
  - Allows us to study the logistics of sampling in deep and shallow waters.
  - Data from the pilot will help determine if additional stations should be added to produce a more precise WPUE estimate in Area 2A.

2A

Stations	Total
Existing	84
New	35-45







INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS IN THE SALMON TROLL AND FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

Regulations governing incidental harvest of halibut in the salmon troll fishery and commercial sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis require the Council to adopt recommended halibut landing restrictions to allow incidental harvest while assuring quotas are not exceeded.

Salmon Troll Fishery

The halibut regulations allocate 15 percent of the non-Indian commercial halibut allocation in Area 2A to the salmon troll fishery as an incidental catch. Regulations (beginning in 2001) direct that the primary management objective is to harvest the incidental quota in the May/June salmon troll fishery with a secondary objective to harvest any remaining quota during July through September. The Council has successfully used landing ratios and a total trip limit to assure a manageable progression of the fishery in past years. A summary of management information for the incidental halibut fishery since the initial season in 1995 is provided in Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1.

Commercial Sablefish Fishery North of Point Chehalis

The total Area 2A halibut quota is too low (less than 932,034 pounds) to provide for an incidental halibut harvest in the commercial sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis. This incidental fishery is allocated that portion of the Washington sport allocation in excess of 214,110 pounds, provided a minimum of 10,000 pounds is available, up to a maximum of 70,000 pounds. In 2011 the total Area 2A halibut quota is 910,000 pounds. A summary of management information for the incidental halibut fishery since the initial season in 2001 is provided in Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1.

Council Action:

1. **Adopt for public review a range of landing restrictions for halibut caught incidentally in the non-Indian commercial troll season that comports with the troll salmon management options, and assures a reasonable utilization of the incidental catch while not exceeding the quota.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1: Summary of Pacific Halibut Incidental Catch Management.

Agenda Order:

a. Agenda Item Overview — Chuck Tracy
b. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
c. Public Comment
d. **Council Action:** Adopt Public Review Options for 2011

PFMC
02/01/10

SUMMARY OF PACIFIC HALIBUT INCIDENTAL CATCH MANAGEMENT

Salmon Troll Fishery

The table below provides the number of licenses, allocation, harvest, and landing restrictions for the incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery since the initial season in 1995.

Incidental Halibut Management in Area 2A Salmon Troll Fishery.

	Licenses Issued					Pounds of Halibut		Restriction	
Year	WA	OR	CA	AK-2A	Total	Allocation	Total Harvest	Halibut per Chinook	Trip Limit
1995	14	104	2	5	125	16,068	2,125	1 per each 20	None
1996	22	82	5	14	123	16,068	9,521	1 + 1 per each 15	20
1997	59	187	10	19	275	21,635	17,570	1 + 1 per each 10	20
1998	44	188	15	18	265	25,344	13,124	1 + 1 per each 8	25
1999	54	193	12	25	284	23,490	9,955	1 + 1 per each 5	35
2000	49	154	8	24	235	24,464	22,350	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2001	63	232	13	37	347	34,046	34,100	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2002	60	223	7	41	331	39,300	41,000	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2003	60	209	10	44	323	39,300	41,917	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2004	74	212	11	47	344	44,554	42,798	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2005	79	249	12	52	392	39,918	42,187	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2006	54	138	6	26	224	41,464	34,354	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2007	62	188	17	25	292	43,667 [a/]	24,126	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2008	55	60	4	16	135	37,707	16,685	1 + 1 per each 2	35
2009	65	49	4	14	132	29,362	11,310	1 + 1 per each 2	35
2010	79	125	7	22	233	25,035	28,627	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2011	-	-	-	-	-	28,126	-	-	-

a/ 40,227 preseason allocation plus 3,440 transferred inseason from directed halibut fishery.

Commercial Sablefish Fishery North of Point Chehalis

The table below provides the allocation, total harvest, landing restrictions, and season dates for the incidental halibut catch in the fixed-gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis since the initial season began in 2001.

Incidental Halibut Management in the Area 2A Sablefish Fishery North of Point Chehalis, Washington.

	Pounds of Halibut		Restrictions	
Year	Allocation	Total Harvest	Halibut per Sablefish (dressed weight)	Season Dates
2001	47,946	26,945	2+80 lb per 1,000 lb	Aug. 15-Oct. 31
2002	88,389	66,599	2+150 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 31
2003	70,000	65,325	2+150 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 31
2004	70,000	67,837	2+100 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 31
2005	70,000	68,013	2+100 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 23
2006	70,000	64,624	2+100 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 31
2007	70,000	45,780	2+100 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 31
2008	70,000	39,729	2+100 lb per 1,000 lb	May 1-Oct. 31
2009	11,895	5,415	100 lb per trip	May 1-Oct. 31
2010	0	-	-	-
2011	0	-	-	-

PFMC
02/02/11

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS IN THE SALMON TROLL AND FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel recommends for Salmon troll operations that the status quo be used as a preferred option, but the Council review a troll option of 1 plus 1 in 4 Chinook not to exceed 25 halibut per trip. The status quo option is 1 plus 1 in 3 Chinook not to exceed 35 halibut per trip.

The harvestable amount of halibut is not enough to allow retention in the sablefish fixed gear fishery this year so no retention would be allowed for 2011.

PFMC
03/05/11

Agenda Item F.2 b
Supplemental Revised REVISED SAS Report
March 2011

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS IN THE SALMON TROLL AND FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) recommends the following options for public review:

- Option 1: Status Quo: Beginning May 1, license holders may land no more than one Pacific halibut per each two Chinook, except one Pacific halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 35 halibut per trip.

- Option 2: Status Quo: Beginning May 1, license holders may land no more than one Pacific halibut per each three Chinook, except one Pacific halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 35 halibut per trip.

- Option 3: Beginning May 1, license holders may land no more than one Pacific halibut per each four Chinook, except one Pacific halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 25 halibut per trip.

PFMC
03/05/11
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SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS IN THE SALMON TROLL AND FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) offers three options:

OPTION 1
One plus one halibut per each two Chinook 35

OPTION 2
One plus one halibut per each three Chinook 35

OPTION 3
One plus one halibut per each four Chinook 25

PFMC
03/05/11

PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES FOR INCIDENTAL CATCH RETENTION OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN THE LIMITED ENTRY AND OPEN ACCESS FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

At its September 2010 meeting, the Council passed a motion to initiate consideration to allow retention of incidentally caught Pacific halibut in the limited entry directed, limited entry daily-trip-limit, and open access sectors of the fixed gear sablefish fisheries south of Point Chehalis. ODFW was given responsibility for developing a preliminary analysis of the biological, socioeconomic, and fishery management implications, based on the assumption that any allocation of halibut for incidental retention in fixed gear sablefish fisheries would come from the Area 2A non-Tribal commercial directed halibut fishery allocation (Agenda Item F.3.b, ODFW Report).

If the Council decides to advance this issue the decisions at this stage include approving a purpose and need statement and a set of alternatives to be fully analyzed; discussion of NEPA compliance and any other features of a decision document are also appropriate. The task at the second Council meeting, tentatively scheduled for September 2011, would be to consider additional analysis of alternatives and identify a preliminary preferred alternative for public review prior to final Council action.

Council Action:

1. **Determine if the halibut bycatch retention should be advanced.**
2. **Provide guidance on the purpose and need statement for considering Pacific Halibut bycatch retention alternatives for fixed gear groundfish fisheries.**
3. **Provide guidance on alternatives for halibut bycatch retention.**
4. **Provide guidance on the form and content of a NEPA compliant decision document.**
5. **Provide guidance on schedule and process expectations.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.3.b, ODFW Report: Initial Consideration of Proposed Changes to Pacific Halibut Allocation for Bycatch and Catch Sharing in the Groundfish Fisheries.

Agenda Order:

a. Agenda Item Overview — Chuck Tracy
b. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Proposal — Lynn Mattes
c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
d. Public Comment
e. **Council Action:** Review and Guide Any Further Development of Alternatives for Analysis

PFMC
02/11/11

This document is not meant to suggest or imply that NEPA scoping for this action has been initiated. NMFS will take the lead for scoping on this action, working with the States and affected Tribes. This document is intended to provide some introductory information on purpose and need statements and possible alternatives.

INITIAL CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO PACIFIC HALIBUT ALLOCATION FOR BYCATCH AND CATCH SHARING IN THE GROUNDFISH FISHERIES

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Proposed Action

The proposed action is to consider changing the Area 2A Pacific halibut (hereafter halibut) catch sharing plan (2A CSP) by transferring all or a portion of the non-tribal directed 2A commercial halibut fishery (hereafter the directed fishery) quota to the fixed gear sablefish fishery (limited entry with or without sablefish endorsement and open access) between 40° 10' N latitude and 46° 53' N latitude (Pt. Chehalis, WA) (hereafter referred to as the central sablefish fishery). The objective of this action is to allow retention of incidentally encountered halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery. Retention of commercially-caught halibut is currently only permitted for the directed fishery and in the salmon troll fishery[1]. The proposed action is expected to primarily affect Oregon and Washington fixed-gear sablefish and directed fishery participants, fish processors that receive landings from those fisheries, and the Area 2A halibut stock. Potential impacts to overfished species are discussed.

1.2. Why the Proposed Action is Needed

The proposed action was requested by the sablefish fishery in the area of Pt Chehalis to 40°10' N latitude (hereafter referred to as the "Central Sablefish Fishery") in 2006 (PFMC, Agenda Item G.1.d, Supplemental Public Comment, September 2006). This request proposed a transfer of 5% of the directed commercial quota to the central sablefish fishery. The rationale for a quota transfer is more efficient use of the limited halibut resource.

[1] If the 2A TAC is greater than 900,000 lbs, the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis is allocated the WA sport allocation that is in excess of 214,100 lbs, provided a minimum of 10,000 lbs is available; up to 70,000 lbs (PFMC 2010).

2.0. ALTERNATIVES

2.1. Development of the Alternatives

Preliminary analyses of a set of Alternatives for the proposed action are provided in response to the industry request (see above) and the request of the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC). The objective of the alternatives is to balance the efficient utilization of the halibut stock (reduce discarding of dead fish) with the expected impacts to fishery sectors that would be affected by a transfer of quota from the directed fishery to the central sablefish fishery.

2.2. Alternative Actions

Three alternatives are proposed for review by the Council. Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative, would continue to prohibit halibut retention for the central sablefish fisheries (all commercial quota would remain allocated to the directed fishery). Alternative 2 would establish a percentage of the directed fishery quota to be transferred to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch. Four Options are presented within Alternative 2 that range from a minimal percent transfer to a full transfer (5%, 25%, 50%, and 100%). Alternative 3 would transfer directed quota to the central sablefish fishery if the directed fishery quota exceeds a predetermined high trigger value or falls below a low trigger value.

Alternative 1: No Action, Maintain Current 2A CSP

Halibut Allocation: The directed fishery will receive 85% of the non-tribal commercial halibut quota and retention of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery will be prohibited.

Alternative 2: Transfer a Percentage of the Directed Fishery Quota to the Central Sablefish Fishery to Allow Retention of Halibut Bycatch

Halibut Transfer Options:

Option 1: Transfer 5% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery.
Option 2: Transfer 25% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery.
Option 3: Transfer 50% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery.
Option 4: Transfer 100% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery.

If this alternative is pursued, it may be prudent to limit the amount of halibut a sablefish vessel may retain to prevent a significant change in fishing behavior. Without some nominal limit, fixed gear sablefish fishers may capture more halibut than they normally would encounter while directly fishing for sablefish (i.e., relative to Alternative 1; see section 5.1.).

Alternative 3: Transfer a Percentage of the Directed Fishery Quota to the Central Sablefish Fishery Contingent on the Area 2A TAC (High and Low Trigger Alternative)

Halibut Transfer Option:

If the 2A TAC is greater than 1,141,927 lbs (directed fishery quota > 200,000 lbs), the central sablefish fishery will be allocated 100% of the directed fishery quota that is in excess of 200,000 lbs ('high trigger'). If the Area 2A TAC is less than 856,446 lbs (directed fishery quota < 150,000 lbs), 100% of the directed fishery quota will be transferred to the central sablefish fishery (low trigger). If the Area 2A TAC is between 856,446 - 1,141,927 lbs (directed fishery quota > 150,000 and < 200,000 lbs, respectively), and then no directed fishery quota will be transferred to the central sablefish fishery.

As described above, it may be prudent to limit the amount of halibut a sablefish vessel may retain if this alternative is pursued (see section 5.1).

3.0. Affected Environment

3.1. Environmental Context for the Proposed Action

3.1.1 Status of Current Knowledge on Halibut Biomass

Canadian and American Pacific halibut stocks are not overfished and have been managed sustainably by the International Pacific Halibut Commission since 1923 (IPHC 2010; NMFS 2010). The IPHC conducts annual resource surveys and analyzes sport and commercial catch data to estimate exploitable halibut biomass for each regulatory area (Figure 3-1; IPHC 2010)[2]. Although coast-wide exploitable biomass estimates have been declining since the early 2000's, the biomass estimates during the 2000's (> 300 million lbs) have been greater than those from the 1950's to the mid 1970's (< 100 million lbs; Figure 3-2). Area 2A (Washington, Oregon, and California) occurs within the southern range of halibut and typically contains less than 1% of the total coast-wide exploitable biomass (Hare 2010). Although relatively minor compared to other regulatory areas, the Area 2A halibut stock is highly valued by tribal, commercial (tribal and non-tribal), and sport fishery participants (charter and private recreational).

[2] All IPHC weights are in net lbs of halibut, which is equal to gross or round lbs x 0.75. All halibut weights in tables and figures throughout this document are therefore in net lbs.

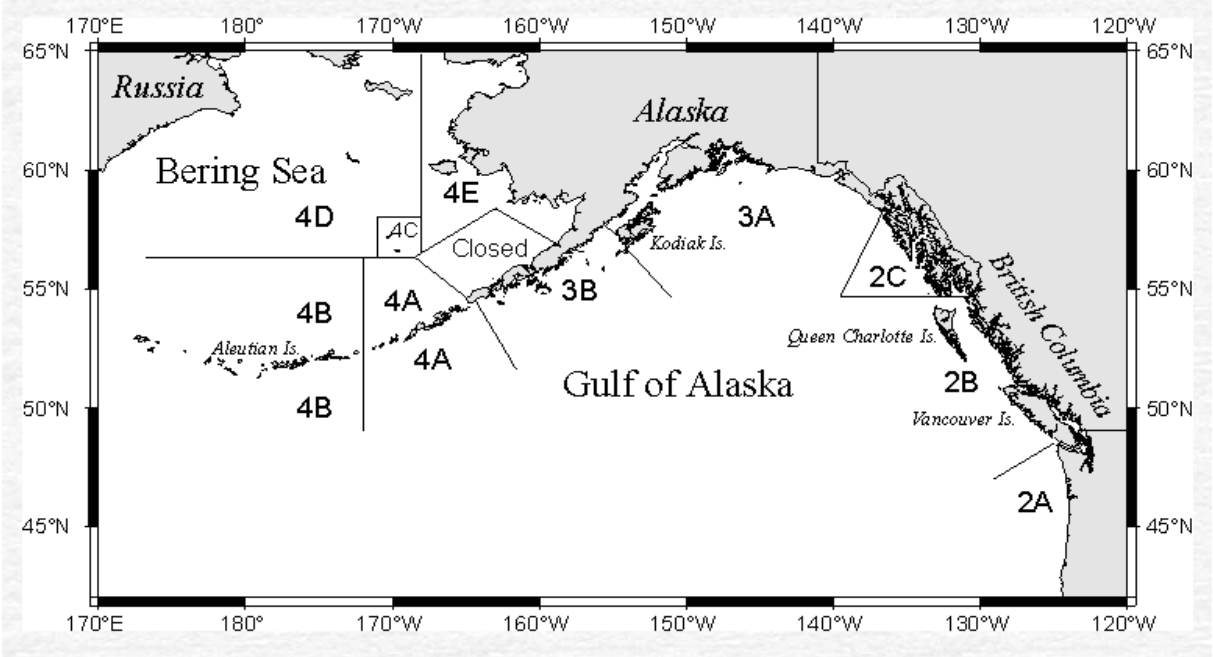

Figure 3-1. IPHC regulatory areas for 2010 (IPHC 2010). Area 2A includes Washington, Oregon, and northern California.

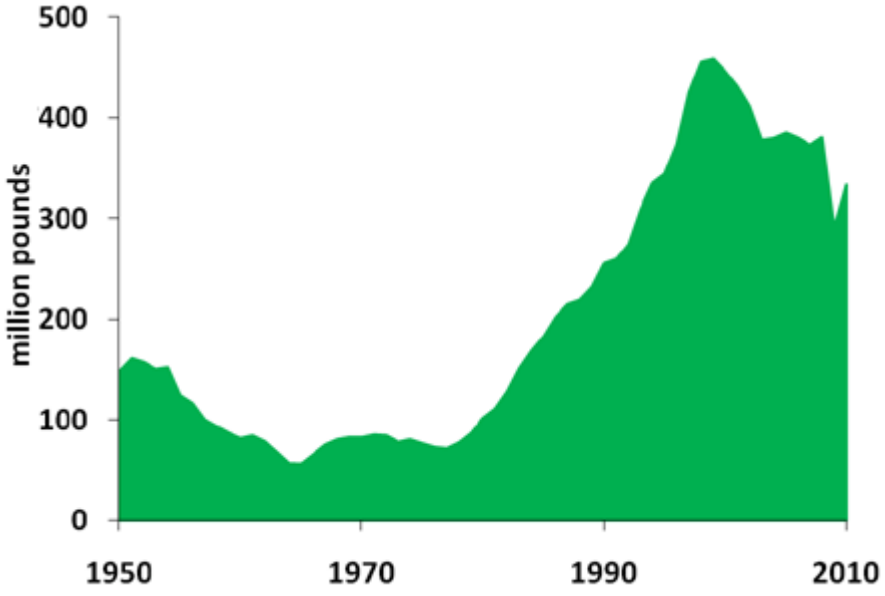

Figure 3-2. Coast-wide halibut exploitable biomass estimates, 1950-2010 (NMFS 2010). The IPHC regulatory Area 2A exploitable biomass is generally less than 1% of the coast-wide exploitable biomass (Hare 2010).

3.2.2. Area 2A Total Allowable Catch and Catch Sharing Plan

Halibut total allowable catches (TAC) for Area 2A are reflective of the 2A exploitable biomass estimates. Consequently, the Area 2A TACs have been declining since 2006, with the exception of the 0.1 million pound increase observed in 2011 relative to 2010 (Figure 3-3). The TACs in Area 2A were much greater during the 2000's (0.8-1.5 million lbs) than during 1970's (0.1-0.5 million lbs), 1980's (0.5-1.1 million lbs), and 1990's (0.5-1.0 million lbs).

The apportionment of the Area 2A TAC among the various sectors of the fishing industry (i.e., tribal, non-tribal, commercial, sport, and subsistence) is determined by the Council and is outlined in the Area 2A CSP (Figure 3-4). Transfer of quota from the directed fishery to the central sablefish fishery would therefore necessitate a change to the Area 2A CSP and would require approval by the Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

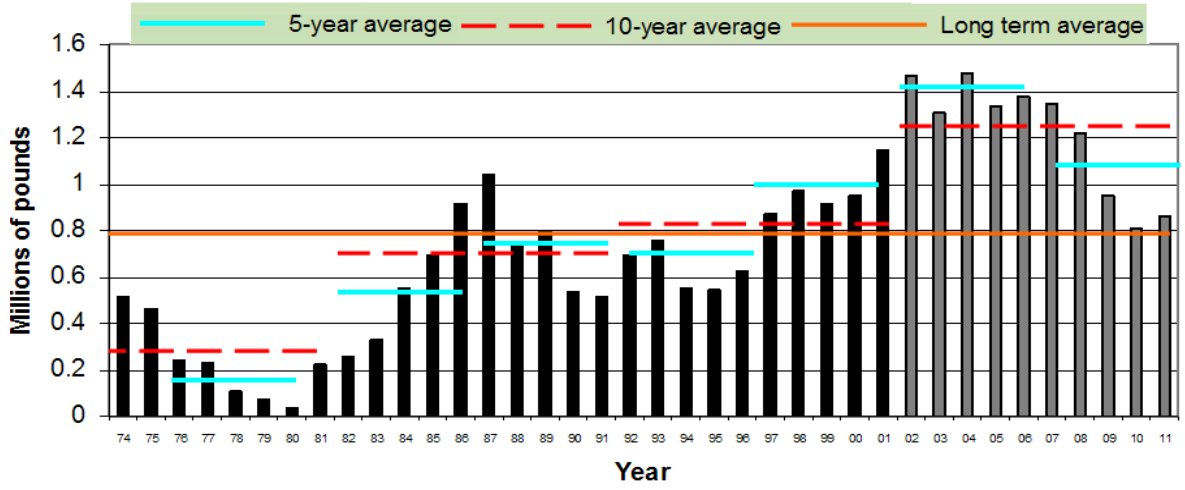

Figure 3-3. IPHC regulatory Area 2A halibut catch from 1974 to 2011 (2002-2011 reflects the TAC and not actual catch).

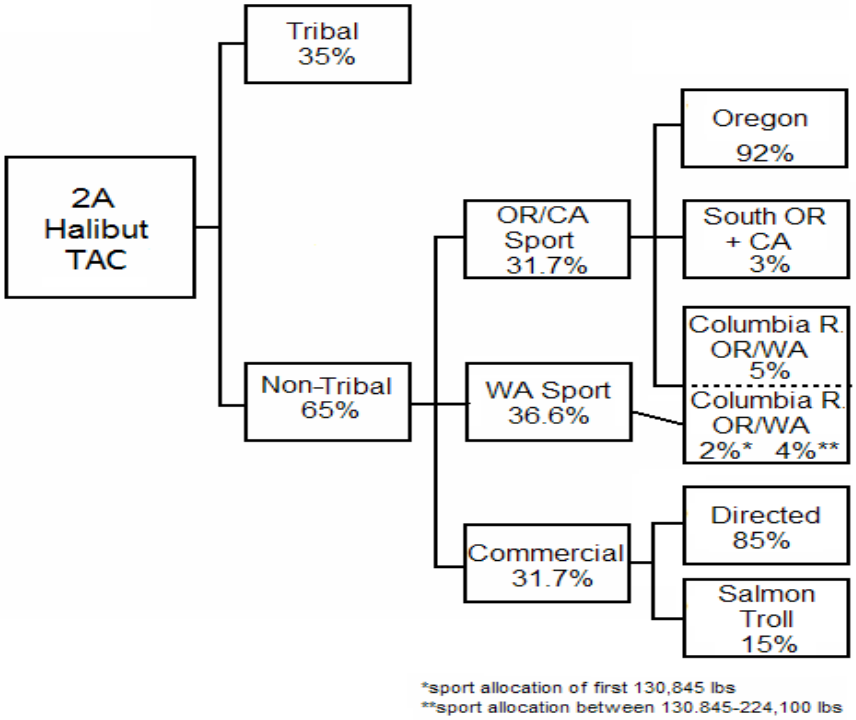

Figure 3-4. 2011 halibut allocation as documented in the Catch Sharing Plan for IPHC regulatory Area 2A (PFMC 2010). Notes: The sablefish fixed gear bycatch fishery north of Pt. Chehalis, WA is not shown[3]. The directed fishery occurs south of Pt. Chehalis.

3.2.3. Protected Resources

Predicting the effect of the proposed changes on protected resources is difficult to quantify, and multiple outcomes seem reasonable to expect. Transfer of halibut quota from the directed fishery to the central sablefish fishery would be expected to reduce yelloweye rockfish impacts because fewer longline sets (gear used in both fisheries) would be needed to obtain the commercial halibut quota; discard halibut mortality weight (bycatch mortality weight) in the central sablefish fishery would be harvested and subtracted from the directed quota. Yelloweye rockfish are an overfished species in Area 2A that are caught in longline sets and must be released, but are assumed to have a high post-release mortality when released after being caught in deep water (Starr et al. 2002; Stewart et al. 2009); ODFW applies a 100% mortality rate to yelloweye rockfish released in recreational halibut fisheries. Reducing the number of longline sets needed to obtain the commercial halibut quota would be expected to benefit yelloweye rockfish rebuilding efforts and/or may allow relaxation of restrictions in other fisheries.

However, transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery could result in increased yelloweye rockfish impacts if sablefish participants change their fishing behavior to target areas that contain more halibut and yelloweye rockfish or if the potential of retaining

[3] If the Area 2A TAC is greater than 900,000 lbs, the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis will be allocated the WA sport allocation that is in excess of 214,100 lbs, provided a minimum of 10,000 lbs is available; up to 70,000 lbs.

halibut persuades pot-gear fishermen to switch to longline gear. As described above, it may be prudent to limit the amount of halibut a sablefish vessel may retain if this alternative is pursued (see section 5.1.).

3.2.4. Directed Commercial Halibut Fishery

The directed fishery currently receives 85% of the non-tribal commercial halibut allocation (Figure 3-4; PFMC (2010)), which corresponds to 17.5% of the Area 2A TAC. The directed quota has decreased during the past five years from ~240,000 lbs in 2006 to ~140,000 lbs in 2010 (Figure 3-5). The directed commercial season has generally lasted for fewer than five days since 1988. The 2010 season lasted for only one 10 hour period.

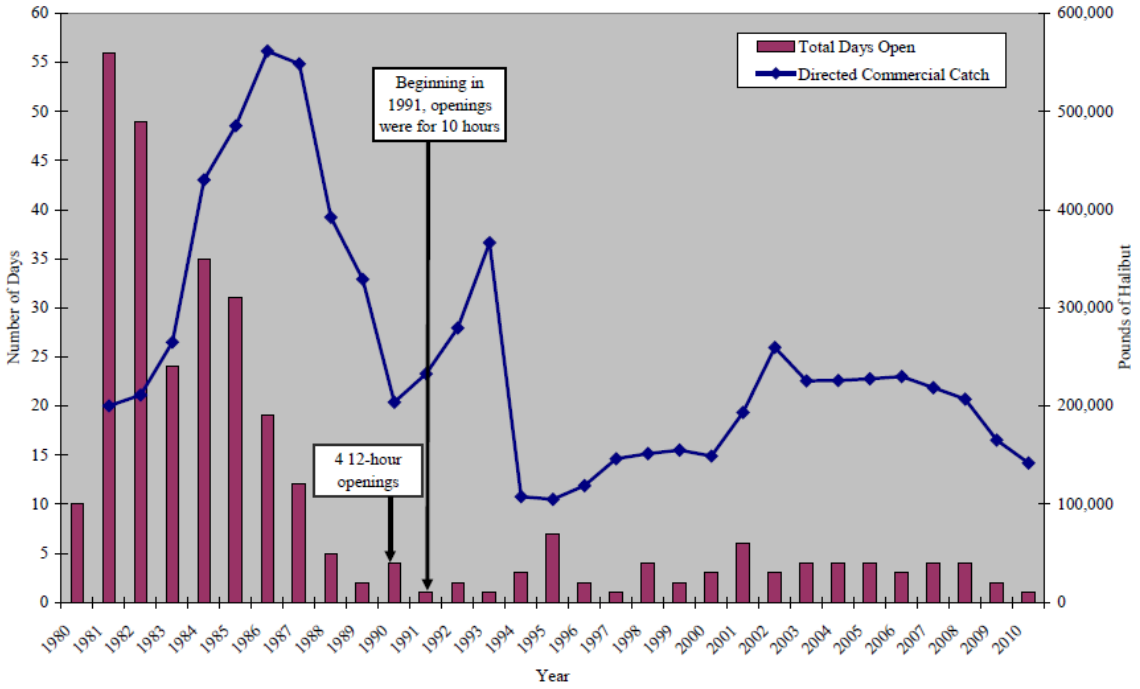

Figure 3-5. Area 2A directed fishery halibut catches and season lengths, 1980 to 2010 (PFMC, Agenda Item D.3.b, Supplemental ODFW PowerPoint, September, 2010).

In PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E[4] (Oregon waters), there are a limited number of commercial vessels that fish the directed fishery, and have ranged as low as 163 boats in 2005 to 291 in 2006 (Table 3-1)[5]. From 2005-2009, the average ex-vessel price of halibut sold in Oregon fluctuated between $2.29 - $4.38 per lb (Figure 3-6). The mean combined annual revenue for PFMC areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E directed halibut fleet, with landings in Oregon, from 2005-2009 was $534,989 (±77,139 standard error (SE)) (Figure 3-7). On average, each vessel made $8,106 (± 736 SE) and annual revenues ranged from $5,555 (± 1,169 SE) in 2005, to $11,142 (±2,390 SE)

[4] PFMC areas differ from IPHC areas. PFMC areas 2A = OR/CA border to Cape Blanco, 2B = Cape Blanco to Cape Perpetua, 2F = Cape Perpetua to Cape Lookout, and 2E = Cape Lookout to Cape Falcon.
[5] The authors had access to fish ticket data reported to ODFW only, and this section does not reference fish caught in PFMC areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E and landed outside of Oregon.

in 2008. However, there is quite a bit of spread in revenue. For example, in 2008 the highest mean revenue by the top three vessels was $92,467 (± 6,121 SE); more than eight times the mean revenue for that year (Figure 3-6). Thus, a few vessels are adept at making around twice the median household income in the US (DeNavas-Walt et al. 2010) in less than one week of fishing, while most others probably supplement their income by directed halibut fishing.

An analysis of the overall fishing portfolio of vessels that prosecuted the directed halibut fishery was performed in order to understand how important halibut is to their annual revenue in 2005-2009. In 2009, halibut ranked second in total revenues of halibut-associated vessels (Fig. 3-9). Sablefish outranked halibut many times over in total annual revenue. Similar trends were observed from 2005-2008. While halibut is a valuable fish, based on price per lb, the limited season and quota most likely do not allow for halibut to be a primary fished species for vessels that target halibut.

Table 3-1. Number of vessels participating in the directed halibut fishery in PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2E, with landings in Oregon, 2005-2010.

Year	Halibut Vessels
2005	163
2006	291
2007	174
2008	207
2009	178

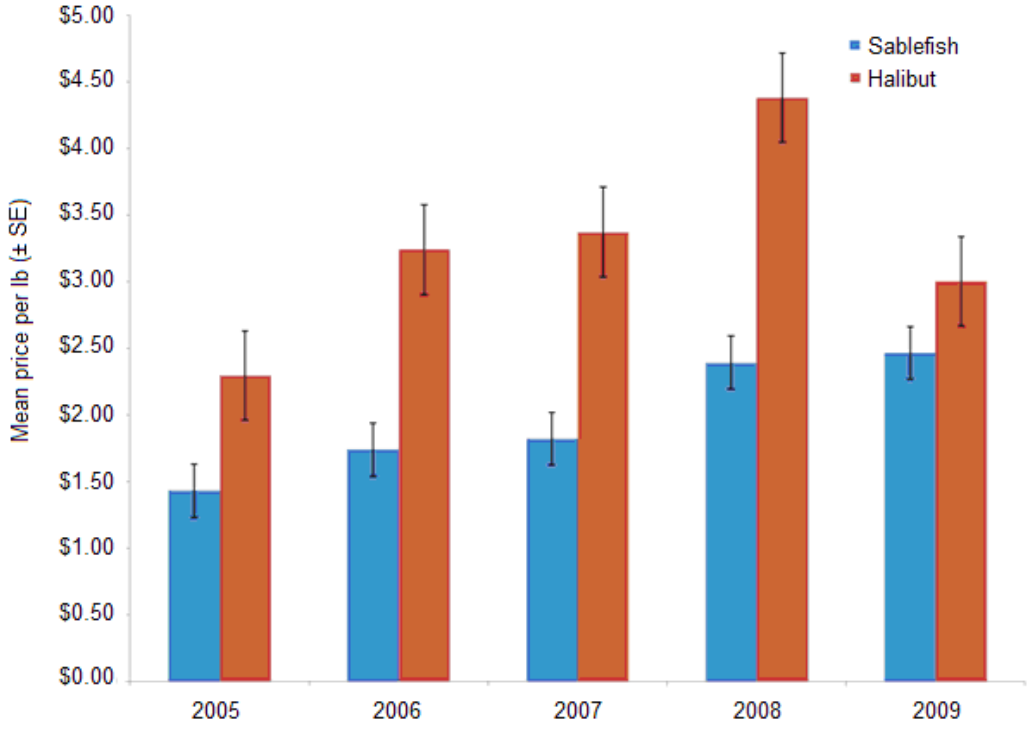

Figure 3-6. Mean price per lb (±SE) for sablefish (includes all fishery access types) and Pacific halibut caught in PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E, and landed in Oregon, 2005-2009.

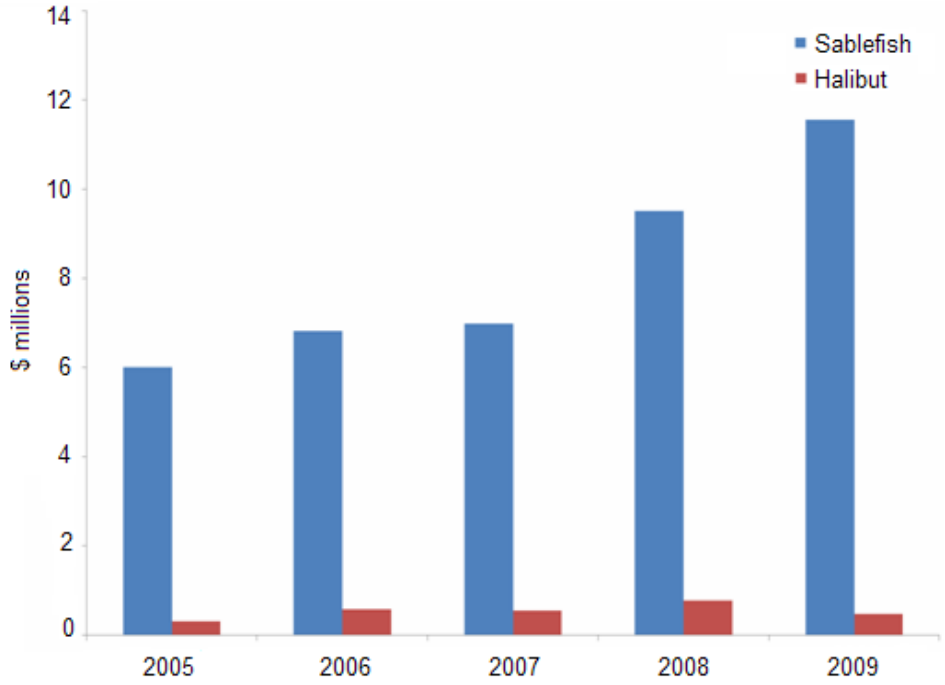

Figure 3-7. Total revenue (in millions of dollars) of sablefish (includes all fishery access types) and halibut caught in PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E, and landed in Oregon, 2005-2009.

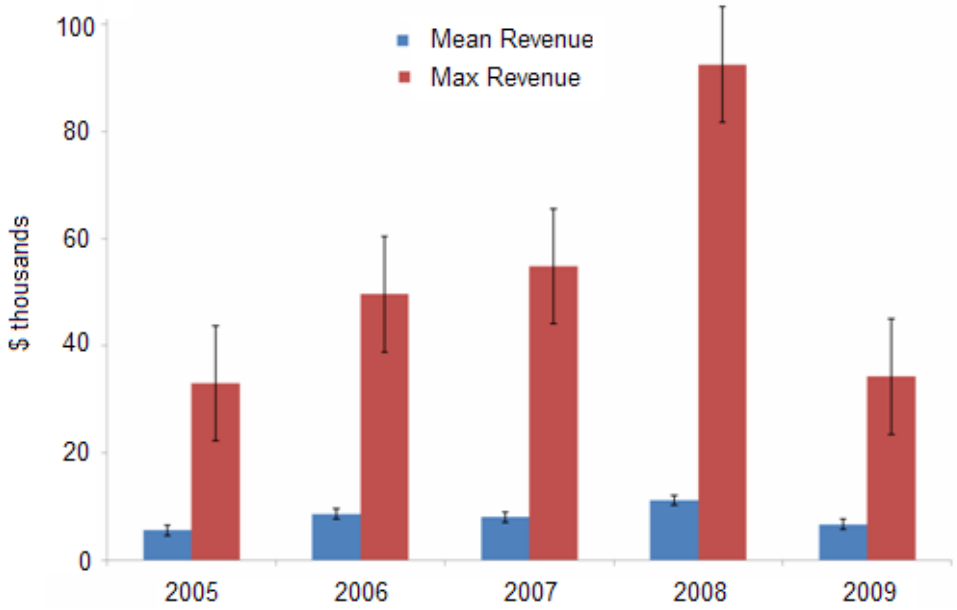

Figure 3-8. Mean annual (± SE) and maximum revenue (thousands of dollars; top 3 vessels) for PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E, with landings in Oregon, 2005-2009.

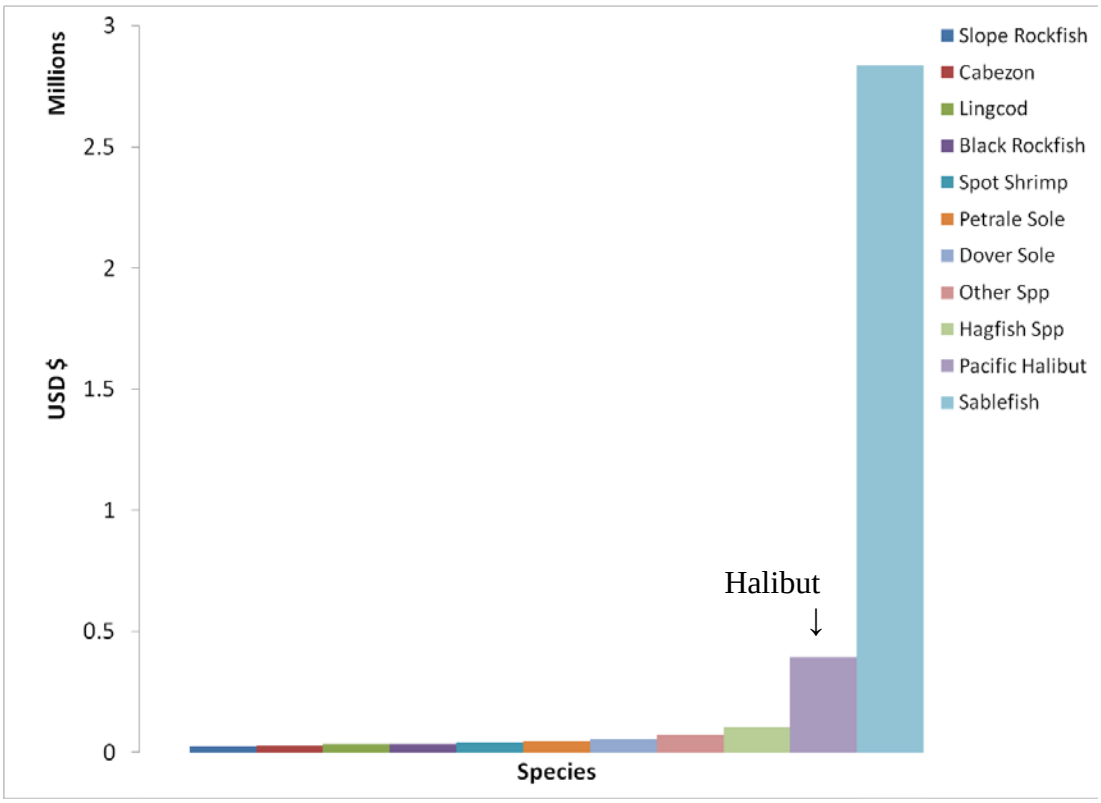

Figure 3-9. Revenue (in millions of dollars) by species from halibut – associated vessels in PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2F, and 2E in 2009. Note: Other Spp is an aggregate species group, which each have <$20,000/year in revenue.

3.2.5. Central Sablefish Fishery

Although the limited entry fixed gear sablefish fishery is managed as a unit north of 36° N latitude (Figure 3-10), Alternatives 2 and 3 only propose permitting retention of halibut bycatch from 40° 10' N latitude (Cape Mendocino, CA) to 46° 53' N latitude (Pt. Chehalis, WA). The area south of 40° 10' N latitude is excluded from the alternatives, because only catches north of 40° 10' N latitude will likely contain appreciable quantities of halibut. The area north of 46° 53' N latitude is excluded from the alternatives to avoid interactions with the tribal fisheries, and provisions for incidental retention of halibut in the sablefish fishery currently exist.

The limited entry sablefish fishery consists of the limited entry fixed gear vessels with (LEW) or without (LEWO) fixed gear sablefish endorsements. LEW vessels are allowed to fish in the primary sablefish fishery to attain their tier-limit beginning April 1 and ending October 31. When fishing outside of the primary season, or once a vessel catches its tier limit, then that vessel is subject to restrictions under the limited entry fixed gear "daily trip limit" (DTL) regulations. LEWO vessels may only fish sablefish under the limited entry fixed gear "daily trip limit" landing restrictions. Finally, open access (OA) vessels are also permitted to land sablefish under open access fixed gear "daily trip limit" landing restrictions.

Eighty LEW vessels fished sablefish during 2009, whereas 156 OA vessels targeted sablefish during the same period (Table 3-3). Note that north of 40° 10' N latitude to 46° 53' N latitude,

almost all limited entry vessels that targeted sablefish carried sablefish endorsements; only 17-sablefish landings were identified for limited entry vessels that did not carry sablefish endorsements, representing three vessels (Table 3-4).

Sablefish landings north of 40° 10' N latitude to 46° 53' N latitude for fixed gear vessels are shown for the entire year of 2009 (Table 3-4) and for the period of the primary season (April 1 – October 31). Approximately 90% of the sablefish landings by LEW vessels occurred during the primary season, whereas approximately 2/3 of the OA landings occurred during the same time period (Table 3-4). Most LEW landings occurred in Port Orford (N = 289), Newport (N = 189), and Eureka (N = 134). For the OA fishery, most landings occurred in Port Orford (N = 357), Coos Bay (N = 317), Eureka (N = 148) and Newport (N = 125).

Table 3-3. Number of commercial vessels that made landings north of 40° 10' N latitude to 46° 53' N latitude for Pacific halibut, and/or LEW (limited entry fixed gear with sablefish endorsement), and/or LEWO (limited entry fixed gear without sablefish endorsement), and/or OA (open access fixed gear sablefish), January 1-December 31, 2009 (PFMC, Agenda Item D.3.b, Supplemental ODFW PowerPoint, September, 2010).

	Halibut	LEW	LEWO	OA	Total
Halibut	106	18	----	73	197
LEW	----	62	----	----	62
LEWO	----	----	3	----	3
OA	----	----	----	83	83
Total	106	80	3	156	345

Table 3-4. Number of sablefish landings by port for LEW and OA north of 40° 10’ N latitude to 46° 53’ N latitude are shown, January 1-December 31, 2009. Only 17 landings were made for LEWO, and are therefore not shown in the table.

Port	LEW	LEWO	OA
Westport	53		26
Illwaco / Willapa Bay	49		120
Astoria / Tilamook	49		55
Newport / Winchester Bay / Florence	189		125
Coos Bay	49		317
Port Orford	289		357
Brookings	24		20
Crescent City/Trinidad	63		68
Eureka	134		148
Total	899	17	1,236

Vessels that were reported to hold both OA and LEW permits were tallied under the LEW column
Landings by LEWO vessels are not shown by port because of confidentiality reasons (i.e., fewer than 3 vessels per port)

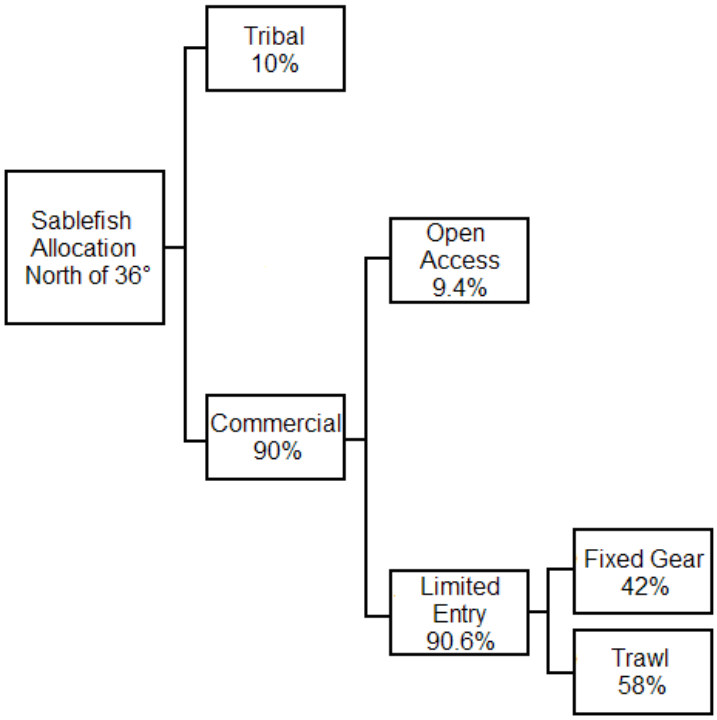

Figure 3-10. Sablefish-allocation structure for fisheries north of 36° N latitude. Fixed gears include longlines and pots.

3.2.6. Halibut Discard Mortality Weight in the Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery

The estimated annual weight of legal size halibut (>32 in; O32) that die after capture and release (bycatch mortality weight or discard mortality weight) in the central sablefish fishery has ranged from 12,719-58,860 lbs from 2002 to 2009 (Table 3-5). A 16% mortality rate is applied to the weight of released O32 halibut to estimate O32 bycatch mortality weight (Gilroy and Hare 2010).

Since 1997, the estimated O32 bycatch mortality weight of halibut released in the sablefish fishery has been deducted "off the top" by IPHC prior to calculating the Area 2A constant exploitative yield (CEY), which consequently reduces the Area 2A TAC and decreases the amount of halibut available to the tribal, recreational, and commercial fisheries (Gilroy and Hare 2010; Hare 2010). Wastage mortality of O32 halibut due to directed fishery fixed gear loss is also deducted from CEY calculations by IPHC. However, O32 wastage is usually minimal for Area 2A, ranging from 0 to 10,000 pounds from 2002-2009 (Hare 2010).

Permitting retention of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery could decrease the O32 bycatch mortality weight and may result in more efficient utilization of the halibut stock if central sablefish fishery participants do not change their behavior to target halibut. Although it would be up to the IPHC, reductions in O32 bycatch mortality weight could theoretically be added to the Area 2A TAC, resulting in more halibut for the other fisheries.

Table 3-5. Area 2A halibut TAC and estimated O32 bycatch mortality weight (net lbs) for the sectors of the central sablefish fishery, 2002-2009 (PFMC, Agenda Item D.3.b, Supplemental ODFW Report 2, September 2010).

Year	2A TAC	LEW	LEWO	OA	Sablefish Total
2002	1,310,000	12,719	0	0	12,719
2003	1,310,000	17,895	0	0	17,895
2004	1,480,000	21,749	0	0	21,749
2005	1,330,000	20,152	0	0	20,152
2006	1,380,000	58,860	0	0	58,860
2007	1,340,000	11,563	110	1,597	13,270
2008	1,220,000	21,639	220	3,634	25,493
2009	950,000	27,365	0	3,524	30,889

3.2.7. Overlap of Participants in the Directed Fishery and the Central Sablefish Fishery

As discussed in 3.2.6., retention of halibut bycatch may reduce O32 bycatch mortality weight; therefore, the coexistence of a directed fishery and fixed gear sablefish fishery that is prohibited from harvesting bycatch halibut results in inefficient use of the halibut stock. However, this transfer would negatively affect directed fishery participants because few vessels participate in both the limited entry sablefish fishery and the directed fishery (Table 3-3). Many (73 of 106)

directed fishery participants in the OA (open access) also access the sablefish fishery. However, the OA fishery receives a relatively minor share (9.4%) of the commercial sablefish quota allocation compared to the limited entry fixed gear fishery (38%) (Figure 3-10). The OA fishery also catches less than 20%, and commonly 0%, of the halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery.

Impacts to revenues of directed fishery participants due to a transfer of quota to the central sablefish fishery would be expected to be proportional to the percentage of transferred quota (i.e., a 5% transfer would be expected to decrease revenues of directed halibut participants by 5%). As discussed in 3.2.4., most commercial vessels that participate in the directed halibut fishery also participate in other fisheries and do not appear to be solely reliant on halibut revenue. However, there are a few vessels that have much greater halibut revenues than average and these vessels could be greatly impacted by a transfer of quota from the directed halibut fishery to the central sablefish fishery.

Although potentially detrimental to directed fishery participants, retention of halibut bycatch would benefit central sablefish fishery participants because they could land and sell halibut that they would have previously been discarded. The percent increase in revenue would be expected to be proportional to the percent of quota transferred, assuming that the ex-vessel halibut price per pound remains constant regardless of the allocation among fisheries. However, the ex-vessel halibut price per lb would likely increase if quota is transferred to the central sablefish fishery. Due to the limited duration of the directed halibut season (1 or 2 days in recent years), the entire commercial quota is delivered to processors at once, thus flooding the markets for a few days a year. A transfer of quota to the central sablefish fishery would result in smaller, more temporally dispersed landings of halibut throughout the year. This would likely increase the ex-vessel halibut price per lb, as documented when the Alaskan commercial halibut fishery season increased from a few days to eight plus months after the fishery switched from open access derbies to an Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) (Barlow and Bakke (Undated); Matulich and Clark 2003; NOAA 2009).

3.2.8. Fish Processors

Fish processors could suffer from changes to the duration and magnitude of halibut landings that would be expected if quota is transferred from the directed fishery to the central sablefish fishery. Capital that fish processors have invested to accommodate singular large pulses of halibut (the directed commercial season was a single 10 hour opening in 2010) could be underutilized with the smaller and more temporally dispersed halibut landings that would be expected with retention of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery. This occurred in Alaska after the commercial halibut season increased from three or four days to eight plus months after the fishery changed from open access derbies to an individual fishing quota (IFQ) (Knapp 1996; Matulich et al. 1996; Matulich and Clark 2003). Lesser halibut harvest rates created surplus halibut processing capacity for processors, and they competed amongst themselves for halibut to reduce their excessive halibut processing capital. Ex-vessel halibut price per pound consequently increased and gross margins for halibut processors were estimated to have decreased by a third (Knapp 1996) or by 56% (Matulich and Clark 2003). Therefore, increases in ex-vessel prices due to alterations of fish landings can result in redistribution in

profits from processors to harvesters (Anderson 2000; Matulich and Clark 2003). However, the magnitude of the halibut fishery in Area 2A is much smaller than for the regulatory areas in Alaska (IPHC 2010), so processors in Area 2A may not have the same capacity as Alaskan processors had prior to implementation of the IFQ.

4.0 Analysis of the Alternatives

4.1 Affected Biological and Socio-economic Sectors

4.2. Alternative 1: No Action

4.3.1. Halibut Resource and Commercial Fisheries

No changes would be made to the Area 2A CSP under the No Action Alternative. The directed fishery would continue to receive 85% of the non-tribal commercial allocation and retention of halibut bycatch would continue to be prohibited in the central sablefish fishery. Additionally, revenues from halibut should remain proportional for the directed fishery participants, central sablefish participants, and for fish processors. O32 bycatch mortality weight is variable and difficult to project, but should remain at levels similar to those from 2002-2009 (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1. The directed fishery quota, O32 bycatch weight of halibut in the central sablefish fishery (SF bycatch), the O32 bycatch mortality weight of halibut released in the central sablefish fishery (Bycatch mort.), and the central sablefish fishery harvest of halibut, 2002-2009. All weights are in net lbs[6] of halibut.

0% bycatch retention				
Year	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	SF quota
2002	222,700	79,494	12,719	0
2003	222,700	111,844	17,895	0
2004	252,475	135,931	21,749	0
2005	226,203	125,950	20,152	0
2006	234,960	367,875	58,860	0
2007	227,955	82,938	13,270	0
2008	213,674	159,331	25,493	0
2009	166,385	193,056	30,889	0

4.4. Alternative 2: Transfer a Percentage of the Directed Fishery Quota to the Central sablefish fishery to Allow Retention of Halibut Bycatch

Alternative 2 would transfer a percentage of the directed halibut quota to the central sablefish fishery. Four options are presented within Alternative 2: 5% (Option 1), 25% (Option 2), 50% (Option 3), and 100% (Option 4). In order to assess the overall effect of transferring a

[6] net lbs for all halibut weights throughout document

percentage of the directed halibut quota to the central sablefish fishery, a retrospective analysis for the years 2002-2009 was performed for Options 1-4. It is important to note that Alternative 2 may necessitate a clause to prevent central sablefish fishery participants from changing their fishing behavior to increase halibut catches.

4.4.1. Option 1: 5% Quota Transfer

4.4.1.1. Halibut Resource

Alternative 2 Option 1 would transfer 5% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch. Had this occurred from 2002-2009, the central sablefish fishery harvest of halibut could have ranged from 8,319-12,624 lbs (Table 4-2). The harvest of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock; total bycatch mortality weights could have decreased by 3.2-14.0% and 1,331-2,020 lbs fewer halibut could have been wasted (Table 4-3). The reduction in waste could possibly result in addition to the Area 2A TAC by the IPHC.

Table 4-2. Retrospective analysis of a 5% transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009[7]. Halibut retention weight is the same for both methods, but total bycatch morality weight is less with a transfer. Notes: All values are in lbs. of halibut; SF bycatch = Sablefish O32 halibut bycatch; Bycatch mort. = O32 bycatch mortality weight.

	0% bycatch retention				5% transfer				
Year	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	SF quota	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	% Bycatch mort.	SF quota
2002	222,700	79,494	12,719	0	211,565	68,359	10,937	-14.0	11,135
2003	222,700	111,844	17,895	0	211,565	100,709	16,113	-10.0	11,135
2004	252,475	135,931	21,749	0	239,851	123,308	19,729	-9.3	12,624
2005	226,203	125,950	20,152	0	214,893	114,640	18,342	-9.0	11,310
2006	234,960	367,875	58,860	0	223,212	356,127	56,980	-3.2	11,748
2007	227,955	82,938	13,270	0	216,557	71,540	11,446	-13.7	11,398
2008	213,674	159,331	25,493	0	202,990	148,648	23,784	-6.7	10,684
2009	166,385	193,056	30,889	0	158,066	184,737	29,558	-4.3	8,319

[7] Directed quota (5%) = Directed quota (0%) x 0.95; SF quota (5%) = Directed quota (0%) * 0.05; SF bycatch (5%) = SF bycatch (0%) – SF quota (5%); Bycatch mort. (5%) = SF bycatch (5%) * 0.16; % Bycatch mort. (5%) = (Bycatch mort. (5%) – Bycatch mort. (0%)) / Bycatch mort. (0%)

Table 4-3. Reduction in O32 bycatch mortality weight that may have occurred if 5% of the directed fishery quota had been transferred to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009[8].

Year	Bycatch mort. reduction
2002	1,782
2003	1,782
2004	2,020
2005	1,810
2006	1,880
2007	1,824
2008	1,709
2009	1,331

4.4.1.2 Commercial Fisheries

Sablefish fishery participants are likely to benefit from this alternative by retaining halibut, which is a more valuable fish than sablefish. However, with only a 5% quota transfer, each individual vessel probably would not benefit greatly from this. Directed fishery halibut participants would suffer from this alternative as the quota would be reduced by 5%. As shown in Section 3.2.4., the degree of dependence on this fishery may vary among participants. Although vessels average $8,106 per year from the directed fishery, a few vessels make upwards of $92,000 per season.

4.4.2. Option 2: 25% Quota Transfer

4.4.2.1. Halibut Resource

Alternative 2 Option 2 would transfer 25% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch. Had this occurred from 2002-2009, the central sablefish fishery harvest of halibut could have ranged from 41,596-63,119 lbs (Table 4-4). The harvest of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock; total bycatch mortality weights could have decreased by 16.0-70.0% and 6,655-10,099 lbs fewer halibut could have been wasted (Table 4-5). A 25% transfer could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock than a 5% transfer (3.2-14.0% and 1,331-2,020 lbs, respectively). The reduction in bycatch mortality weight could possibly result in addition to the Area 2A TAC by the IPHC.

[8] Bycatch mort. reduction = Bycatch mort. Bycatch mort. (0%) – Bycatch mort. (5%)

Table 4-4. Retrospective analysis of a 25% transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009. Halibut retention weight is the same for both methods, but total morality weight is less with a transfer. Notes: All values are in lbs. of halibut; SF bycatch = Sablefish O32 halibut bycatch; Bycatch mort. = O32 bycatch mortality weight.

	0% bycatch retention				25% transfer				
Year	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	SF quota	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	% Bycatch mort.	SF quota
2002	222,700	79,494	12,719	0	167,025	23,819	3,811	-70.0	55,675
2003	222,700	111,844	17,895	0	167,025	56,169	8,987	-49.8	55,675
2004	252,475	135,931	21,749	0	189,356	72,813	11,650	-46.4	63,119
2005	226,203	125,950	20,152	0	169,652	69,399	11,104	-44.9	56,551
2006	234,960	367,875	58,860	0	176,220	309,135	49,462	-16.0	58,740
2007	227,955	82,938	13,270	0	170,966	25,949	4,152	-68.7	56,989
2008	213,674	159,331	25,493	0	160,256	105,913	16,946	-33.5	53,419
2009	166,385	193,056	30,889	0	124,789	151,460	24,234	-21.5	41,596

Table 4-5. Reduction in O32 bycatch mortality weight that may have occurred if 25% of the directed fishery quota had been transferred to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009.

Year	Bycatch mort. reduction
2002	8,908
2003	8,908
2004	10,099
2005	9,048
2006	9,398
2007	9,118
2008	8,547
2009	6,655

4.4.2.2. Commercial Fisheries

Sablefish fishery participants are likely to benefit from this alternative by retaining halibut, which is a more valuable fish than sablefish. With a 25% quota transfer, it is likely that individual vessels will benefit more from this option than Option 1. Directed fishery halibut participants would suffer from this alternative as the quota would be reduced by 25%. As shown in Section 3.2.4., the degree of dependence on this fishery may vary among participants. Although vessels average $8,106 per year from the directed fishery, a few vessels make upwards of $92,000 per season.

4.4.3. Option 3: 50% Quota Transfer

4.4.3.1. Halibut Resource

Alternative 2 Option 3 would transfer 50% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch. Had this occurred from 2002-2009, the central sablefish fishery harvest of halibut could have ranged from 83,193-126,238 lbs (Table 4-6). The harvest of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock; total bycatch mortality weights could have decreased by 43.1-100.0% and 12,719-20,198 lbs fewer halibut could have been wasted (Table 4-7). A 50% transfer could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock than a 25% transfer (16.0-70.0% and 6,655-10,099 lbs, respectively). During 2002 and 2007, the bycatch mortality could have been 0 lbs because the central sablefish fishery would have been able to harvest every O32O halibut. The reduction in bycatch mortality weight could possibly result in addition to the Area 2A TAC by the IPHC.

Table 4-6. Retrospective analysis of a 50% transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009. Halibut retention weight is the same for both methods, but total morality weight is less with a transfer. All values are in lbs. of halibut; SF bycatch = Sablefish O32 halibut bycatch; Bycatch mort. = O32 bycatch mortality weight.

	0% bycatch retention				50% transfer				
Year	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	SF quota	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	% Bycatch mort.	SF quota
2002	222,700	79,494	12,719	0	143,206*	0	0	-100.0	111,350
2003	222,700	111,844	17,895	0	111,350	494	79	-99.6	111,350
2004	252,475	135,931	21,749	0	126,238	9,694	1,551	-92.9	126,238
2005	226,203	125,950	20,152	0	113,102	12,849	2,056	-89.8	113,102
2006	234,960	367,875	58,860	0	117,480	250,395	40,063	-31.9	117,480
2007	227,955	82,938	13,270	0	145,017*	0	0	-100.0	113,978
2008	213,674	159,331	25,493	0	106,837	52,494	8,399	-67.1	106,837
2009	166,385	193,056	30,889	0	83,193	109,864	17,578	-43.1	83,193

* SF bycatch was less than 50% of directed quota and leftover lbs were transferred back to the directed quota

Table 4-7. Reduction in O32 bycatch mortality weight that may have occurred if 25% of the directed fishery quota had been transferred to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009.

Year	Bycatch mort. reduction
2002	12,719
2003	17,816
2004	20,198
2005	18,096
2006	18,797
2007	13,270
2008	17,094
2009	13,311

4.4.3.2. Commercial Fisheries

Sablefish fishery participants are likely to benefit from this alternative by retaining halibut, which is a more valuable fish than sablefish. With a 50% quota transfer, it is likely that individual vessels will benefit more from this option than Options 1 or 2. Directed halibut fishery participants would suffer from this alternative as the quota would be reduced by 50%. As shown in Section 3.2.4., the degree of dependence on this fishery may vary among participants. Although vessels average $8,106 per year from the directed fishery, a few vessels make upwards of $92,000 per season. A 50% reduction in quota would seriously impact their ability to have revenues of this magnitude. To mitigate this effect on directed fishery participants, the Council could consider a special concession to allow these directed halibut fishery participants into the central sablefish fishery, for example.

4.4.4. Option 4: 100% quota transfer

4.4.4.1. Halibut Resource

Alternative 2 Option 4 would transfer 100% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch. Had this occurred from 2002-2009, the central sablefish fishery harvest of halibut could have ranged from 79,494-234,960 lbs (Table 4-8) (note that the catch of O32 halibut in the central sablefish fishery was less than the directed quota in all years except for 2006 and 2009 and there would have been extra (leftover) quota that could have been allocated back to the directed fishery). The harvest of halibut bycatch in the central sablefish fishery could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock; total bycatch mortality weights could have decreased by 63.9-100.0% (100% for most years) and 12,719-37,594 lbs fewer halibut could have been wasted (Table 4-9). A 100% transfer could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock than a 50% transfer (43.1-100.0% and 12,719-20,198, respectively). For all years except 2006 and 2009, the bycatch mortality could have been 0 lbs because the central sablefish fishery would have been able to harvest all O2 halibut bycatch. The leftover central sablefish fishery quota could be transferred back to the directed fishery.

Table 4-8. Retrospective analysis of a 100% transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009. Halibut retention weight is the same for both methods, but total morality weight is less with a transfer. This figure differs from the related figures in sections 4.4.1.-4.4.3. (sablefish quota vs. sablefish catch) because the central sablefish fishery O32 bycatch was less than the directed fishery quota in most years. Notes: All values are in lbs. of halibut; SF bycatch = Sablefish O32 halibut bycatch; Bycatch mort. = O32 bycatch mortality weight.

	0% bycatch retention				100% transfer				
Year	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	SF quota	Leftover quota (for directed)	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	% Bycatch mort.	SF catch
2002	222,700	79,494	12,719	0	143,206	0	0	-100.0	79,494
2003	222,700	111,844	17,895	0	110,856	0	0	-100.0	111,844
2004	252,475	135,931	21,749	0	116,544	0	0	-100.0	135,931
2005	226,203	125,950	20,152	0	100,253	0	0	-100.0	125,950
2006	234,960	367,875	58,860	0	0	132,915	21,266	-63.9	234,960
2007	227,955	82,938	13,270	0	145,018	0	0	-100.0	82,938
2008	213,674	159,331	25,493	0	54,343	0	0	-100.0	159,331
2009	166,385	193,056	30,889	0	0	26,671	4,267	-86.2	166,385

Table 4-9. Reduction in O32 bycatch mortality weight that may have occurred if 100% of the directed fishery quota had been transferred to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009.

Year	Bycatch mort. reduction
2002	12,719
2003	17,895
2004	21,749
2005	20,152
2006	37,594
2007	13,270
2008	25,493
2009	26,622

4.4.4.2. Commercial Fisheries

Sablefish fishery participants are likely to benefit from this alternative by retaining halibut, which is a more valuable fish than sablefish. With a 100% quota transfer, it is likely that individual vessels will benefit more from this option than Options 1-3. Directed halibut fishery participants would suffer from this alternative as the quota would be reduced by 100%. However, even with a 100% transfer, there may have been leftover quota for the directed fishery in all years except for 2006 and 2009 (the directed quota was greater than the bycatch of halibut in the central sablefish fishery) (Table 4-9). As shown in Section 3.2.4., the degree of dependence on this fishery may vary among participants. Although vessels average $8,106 per year from the directed fishery, a few vessels make upwards of $92,000 per season. A 100% reduction in quota would seriously impact their ability to have revenues of this magnitude. To mitigate this effect on directed fishery participants, the Council could consider a special

concession to allow these directed halibut fishery participants into the central sablefish fishery, for example.

4.5. Alternative 3: High and Low Triggers

Alternative 3 would transfer the directed fishery quota in excess of 200,000 lbs to the southern sablefish fish fishery (high trigger) and would transfer 100% of the directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery if the directed fishery quota is less than 150,000 lbs (low trigger)[9]. No transfer of quota would occur if the directed fishery quota is between 150,000-200,000 lbs. It is important to note that either of the "trigger" options of Alternative 3 may necessitate a clause to prevent central sablefish fishery participants from changing their fishing behavior to target halibut.

The high trigger would allow the central sablefish fishery to harvest bycatch in years when halibut are abundant. The low trigger would eliminate the directed fishery when halibut are scarce. The objective of the low trigger is to avoid having directed fishery seasons of less than one 10-hour opening (see section 3.2.4.).

4.5.1. Halibut Resource

Had Alternative 3 occurred from 2002-2009, the high trigger would have been met and transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery would have occurred in all years, except for 2009 (Table 4-10). Therefore, the high trigger could have resulted in more efficient use of the halibut stock than had occurred due to reduced bycatch mortality weights (0-8,396 lbs; Table 4-11). In comparison to Alternative 2, reductions in bycatch mortality weight from Alternative 3 (0.0-38.6%) would have been greater than Option 1 (3.2-14.0%) and less than Options 2 (16.0-70.0%), 3 (43.1-100.0%), and 4 (63.9-100.0%).

The low trigger was exceeded for all years due to greater than average Area 2A TACs from 2002-2009 (see section 3.2.4). If the low trigger is not met and the quota is less than the O32 bycatch weight, then there would be low bycatch mortality weight. If the low trigger is not met and the quota is greater than the O32 bycatch weight, then the bycatch mortality weight would equal the O32 bycatch weight in excess of the quota multiplied by 0.16 (the estimated mortality rate of released halibut; Gilroy and Hare (2010)).

[9] For Area 2A TAC "trigger" weights, see Section 2.2.

Table 4-10. Retrospective analysis of the transfer of directed fishery quota in excess of 200,000 lbs to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009. Halibut retention weight is the same for both methods, but total morality weight is less with a transfer. All values are in lbs. of halibut; SF bycatch = Sablefish O32 halibut bycatch; Bycatch mort. = O32 bycatch mortality weight.

	0% bycatch retention				Alternative 3				
Year	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	SF quota	Directed quota	SF bycatch	Bycatch mort.	% Bycatch mort.	SF quota
2002	222,700	79,494	12,719	0	200,000	56,794	9,087	-28.6	22,700
2003	222,700	111,844	17,895	0	200,000	89,144	14,263	-20.3	22,700
2004	252,475	135,931	21,749	0	200,000	83,456	13,353	-38.6	52,475
2005	226,203	125,950	20,152	0	200,000	99,747	15,960	-20.8	26,203
2006	234,960	367,875	58,860	0	200,000	332,915	53,266	-9.5	34,960
2007	227,955	82,938	13,270	0	200,000	54,983	8,797	-33.7	27,955
2008	213,674	159,331	25,493	0	200,000	145,657	23,305	-8.6	13,674
2009	166,385	193,056	30,889	0	166,385	193,056	30,889	0.0	0

Table 4-11. Reduction in O32 bycatch mortality weight that may have occurred if directed fishery quota in excess of 200,000 lbs had been transferred to the central sablefish fishery to allow retention of halibut bycatch, 2002-2009.

Year	Bycatch mort. reduction
2002	3,632
2003	3,632
2004	8,396
2005	4,192
2006	5,594
2007	4,473
2008	2,188
2009	0

4.5.2. Commercial Fisheries

Transfer of directed fishery quota in excess of 200,000 lbs would have occurred in all years from 2002-2009, except for 2009. The transfer would have reduced the directed fishery quota by 6.4-20.8% from 2002-2009. Therefore, impacts to directed halibut fishery participants would have been greater than Alternative 2 Option 1 (5%) and less than Options 2 (25%), 3 (50%), and 4 (100%).

Central sablefish fishery participants are likely to benefit from this alternative by retaining halibut, which is a more valuable fish than sablefish. Directed halibut fishery participants would probably suffer from this alternative as the quota would have been reduced in all years except for 2009. As shown in Section 3.2.4., the degree of dependence on this fishery may vary among participants. Although vessels average $8,106 per year from the directed fishery, a few vessels make upwards of $92,000 per season. Reductions in quota would seriously impact their ability to have revenues of this magnitude.

The low trigger was exceeded for all years due to greater than average Area 2A TACs from 2002-2009 than since the 1970's (see section 3.2.4). If the low trigger is met, then directed halibut fishery participants would suffer because their entire quota would be transferred to the central sablefish fishery. To mitigate this effect on directed fishery participants, the Council could consider a special concession to allow these individuals directed halibut fishery participants into the central sablefish fishery, for example.

Table 4-13. Percent reductions in the directed fishery quota that could have occurred if quota in excess of 200,000 lbs had been transferred to the central sablefish fishery, 2002-2009.

Year	% Directed quota
2002	-10.2
2003	-10.2
2004	-20.8
2005	-11.6
2006	-14.9
2007	-12.3
2008	-6.4
2009	0.0

5.0 Additional Considerations

5.1.1. Clauses to Prevent Behavioral Changes

Transfer of directed quota to the central sablefish fishery may create incentive for sablefish fishery participants to target and catch more halibut because of its high value. Sablefish participants that use longlines may target areas with more halibut and sablefish participants that use pots (the other type of fixed gear used by sablefish fishery participants) may switch to longlines because halibut are more readily caught with longlines than with pots. These behavioral changes could cause the central sablefish fishery to act as a surrogate of the directed fishery, which could negate reductions in bycatch mortality weights that would have been expected with a transfer of quota from the directed fishery to the central sablefish fishery. Changes in fishing behavior could also result in indirect effects on bycatch of overfished species, such as yelloweye rockfish.

To prevent behavioral changes by sablefish fishery participants, clauses could be included to limit the number of halibut a vessel may retain and to prevent fishery participants who have traditionally fished pot gear from switching to longlines. Potential clauses could include limiting the number of halibut per landing or having a halibut weight limit based on total sablefish poundage caught. These restrictions have been applied to the fixed gear sablefish fishery north of 46° 53' N latitude in previous years; incidental halibut landings were limited to 100 lbs per landing in 2009 and the 2008 fishery was limited to 100 lbs of halibut per 1,000 lbs of sablefish landed, with up to two extra halibut in excess of the 100:1,000 pound ratio (IPHC 2010). It is difficult to project if these clauses would be sufficient to discourage behavioral changes by central sablefish fishery participants.

5.1.2. Compliance with the Magnuson Stevens Act

A transfer of directed fishery quota to the central sablefish fishery could increase compliance with Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA) conservation and management measures: (a) promote efficiency (b) minimize costs and avoid duplications (c) minimize bycatch or mortality of bycatch (DOC 2007). This transfer of quota could also result in infringement of MSA conservation and management measures: (a) allocation must be fair and equitable (b) minimize adverse impacts to communities.

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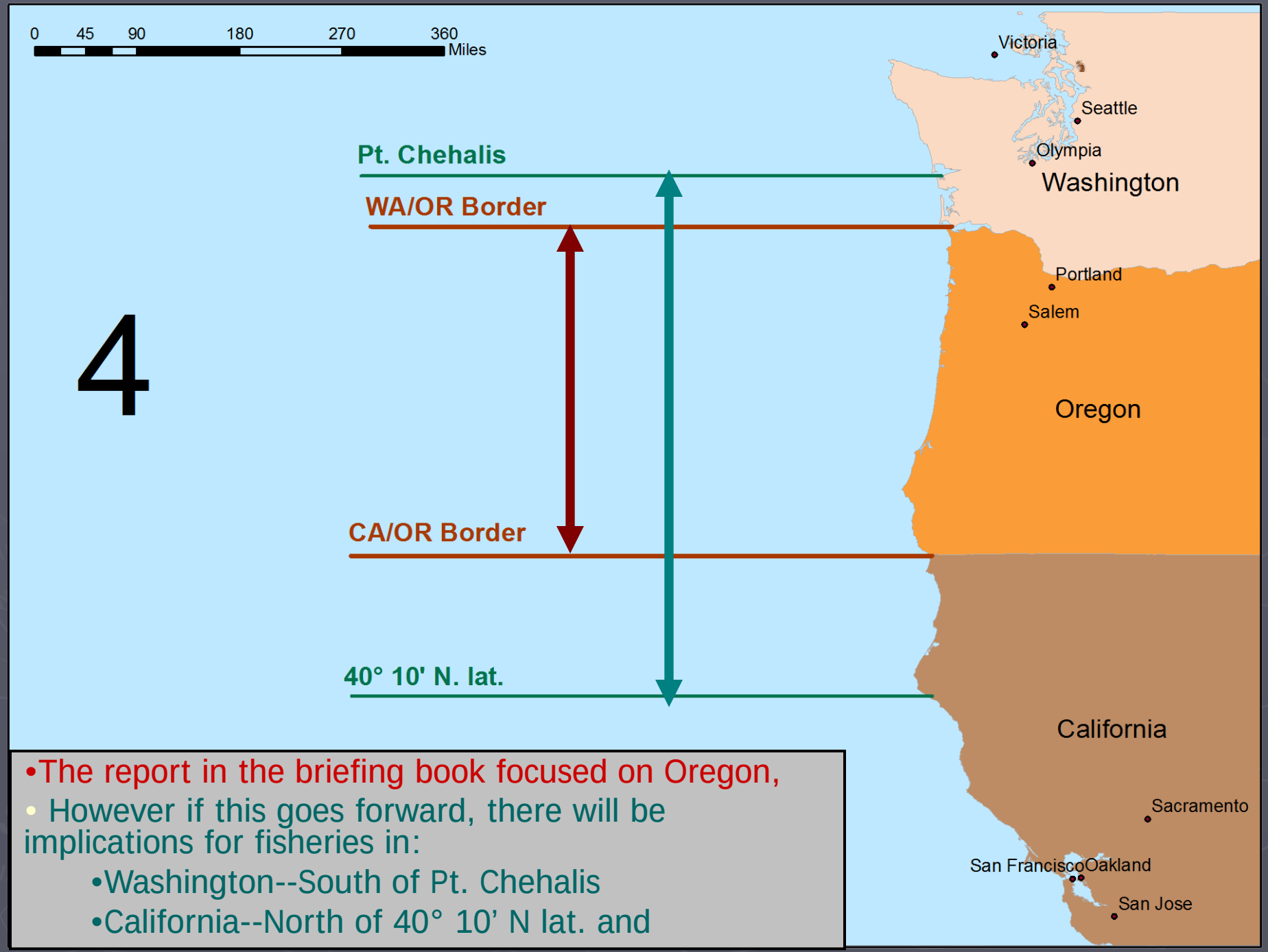
Initial Consideration of Proposed Changes to Pacific Halibut Allocation for Bycatch and Catch Sharing in the Groundfish Fisheries

Preliminary Alternatives for Retaining Halibut Bycatch in Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries

Agenda Item F.3. March 2011



4

- The report in the briefing book focused on Oregon,
- However if this goes forward, there will be implications for fisheries in:
  - Washington--South of Pt. Chehalis
  - California--North of 40° 10’ N lat. and

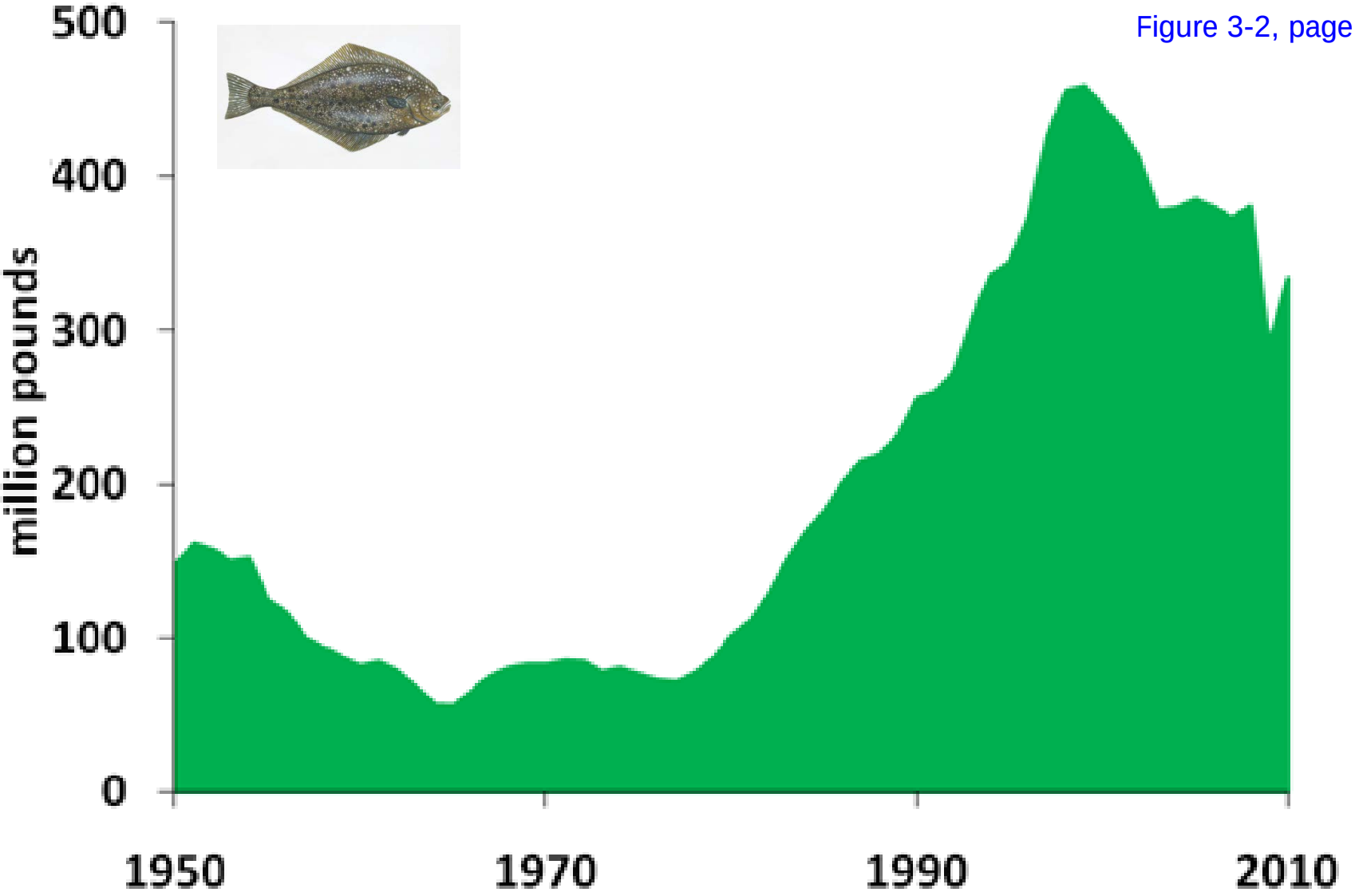
Purpose and Need

- Consider changing the Area 2A Pacific halibut catch sharing plan (CSP) by transferring quota from the non-tribal directed commercial halibut fishery to the fixed gear sablefish fishery
- Objective is to allow retention of incidentally encountered halibut bycatch in the fixed gear fishery
  - Between 40° 10’ N lat. And Pt. Chehalis, WA

Purpose and Need

- Proposed action was requested by industry at the September 2006 Council meeting
  - Requested a transfer of 5% of the directed commercial quota to the sablefish fixed gear fishery
- Rationale for a quota transfer is more efficient use of the halibut resource

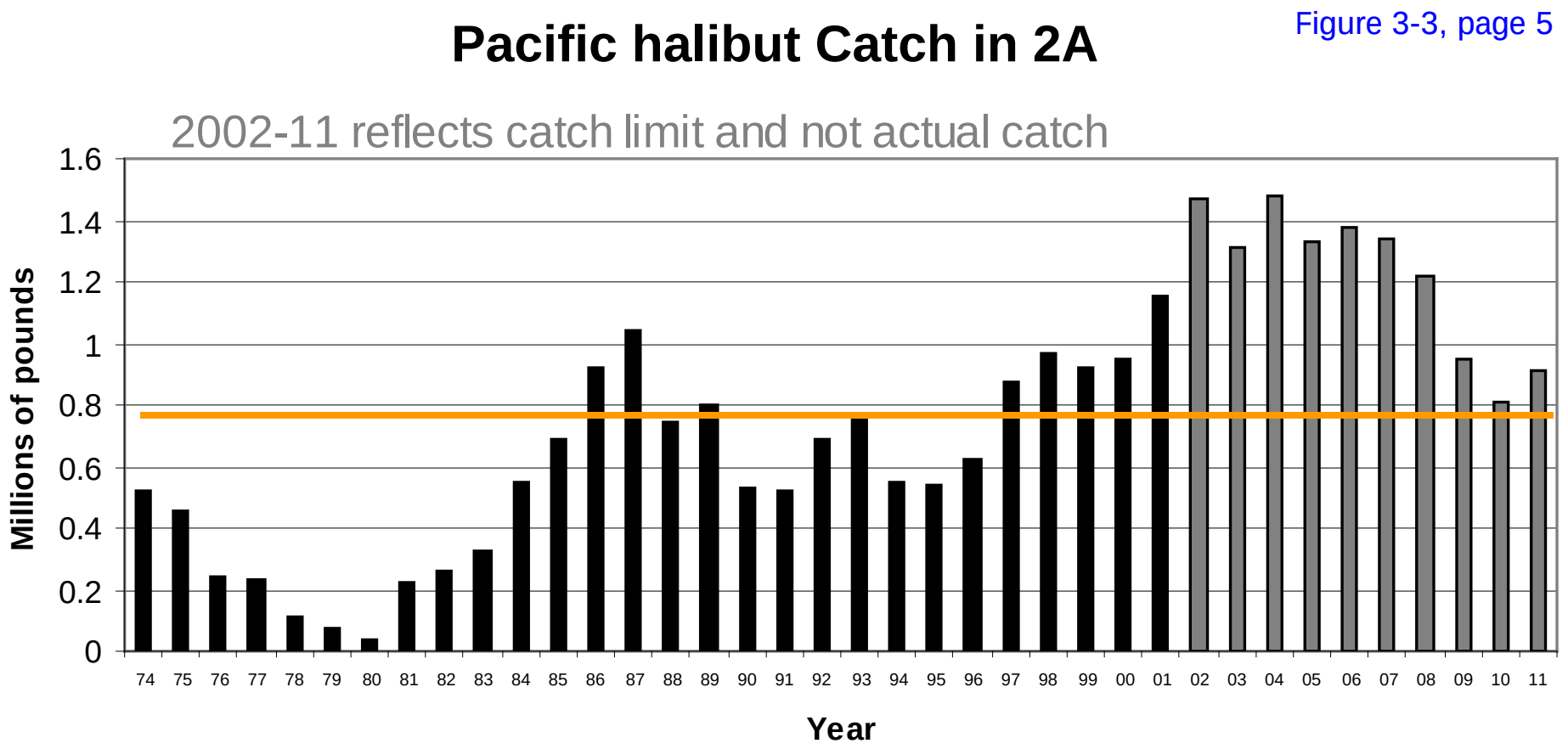
Figure 3-2, page 4

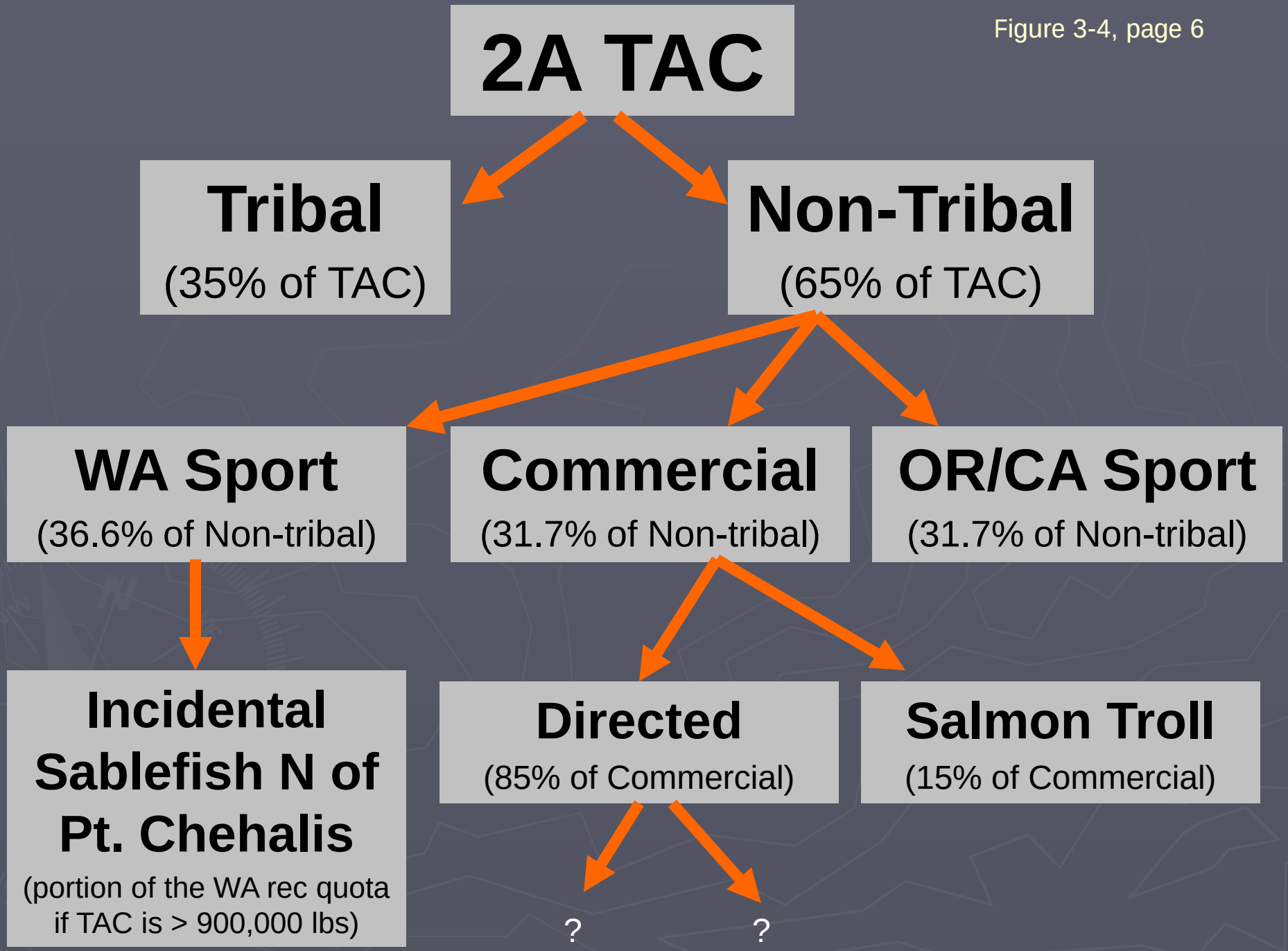


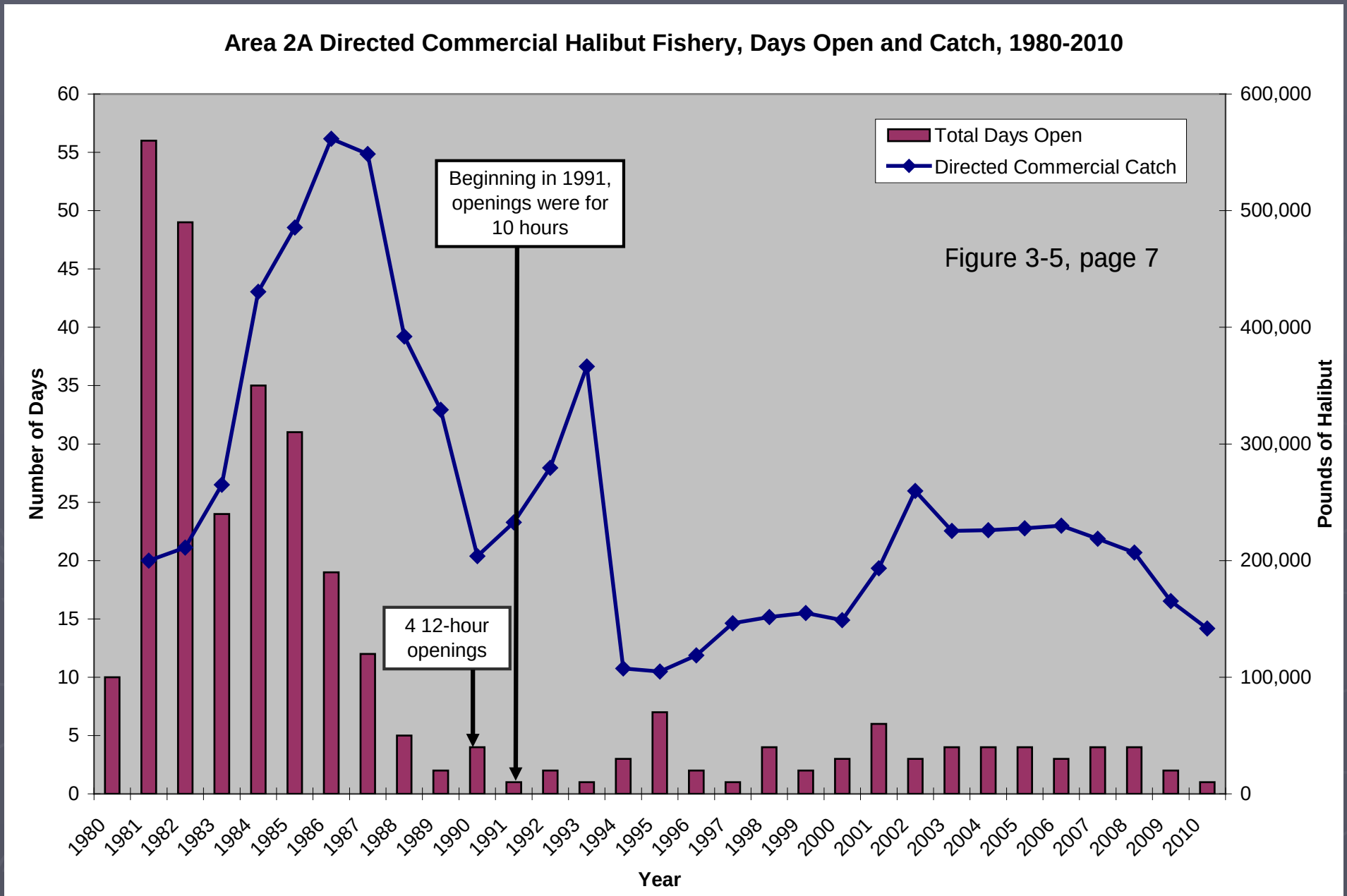
Coast-wide halibut exploitable biomass estimates, 1950-2010 (NMFS 2010). The IPHC regulatory Area 2A exploitable biomass is generally less than 1% of the coast-wide exploitable biomass (Hare 2010)

IPHC regulatory Area 2A halibut catch from 1974 to 2011

Figure 3-3, page 5




2A TAC
Tribal
(35% of TAC)
Non-Tribal
(65% of TAC)
WA Sport
(36.6% of Non-tribal)
Commercial
(31.7% of Non-tribal)
OR/CA Sport
(31.7% of Non-tribal)
Incidental Sablefish N of Pt. Chehalis
(portion of the WA rec quota if TAC is > 900,000 lbs)
Directed
(85% of Commercial)
Salmon Troll
(15% of Commercial)
?
?


Area 2A Directed Commercial Halibut Fishery, Days Open and Catch, 1980-2010
Total Days Open
Directed Commercial Catch
Beginning in 1991, openings were for 10 hours
4 12-hour openings
Figure 3-5, page 7
Number of Days
Pounds of Halibut
Year
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60
100,000
200,000
300,000
400,000
500,000
600,000
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010

Number of vessels participating in the directed halibut fishery with landings in Oregon, 2005-2009

Table 3-1, page 8

Year	Halibut Vessels	Halibut Landings
2005	55	163
2006	67	291
2007	68	174
2008	70	207
2009	70	178

Number of vessels with Directed Commercial halibut licenses that made landings during January 1 – December 31, 2009 for Pacific halibut, limited entry fixed gear with sablefish endorsement (LEW), sablefish without endorsement (LEWO) and open access sablefish (OA) (Pt. Chehalis to 40° 30' N. Lat.)

Table 3-3, page 11

	Halibut	LEW	LEWO	OA	**Total**
Halibut	131	24	---	75	**230**
LEW	---	37	---	---	**37**
LEWO	---	---	3	---	**3**
OA	---	---	---	69	**69**
Total	**131**	**61**	**3**	**144**	**339**

- Out of the 230 vessels that had commercial halibut licenses in 2009
  - 131 did not land any sablefish, *don't know how many actually landed halibut*
  - 24 had a halibut license and landed limited entry sablefish with endorsement
  - 0 had a halibut license and landed limited entry sablefish without endorsement
  - 75 had a halibut license and landed open access sablefish

Number of sablefish landings by port for LEW and OA north of 40° 10’ N latitude to Pt. Chehalis are shown, January 1-December 31, 2009

Port	LEW	LEWO	OA
Westport	53		26
Illwaco/Willapa Bay	49		120
Astoria/Tillamook	49		55
Newport/Wincheter Bay/ Florence	189		125
Coos Bay	49		317
Port Orford	289		357
Brookings	24		20
Crescent City/Trinidad	63		67
Eureka	134		148
Total	**899**	**17**	**1,236**

Table 3-4, page 12

Vessels that were reported to hold both OA and LEW permits were tallied under the LEW column

Landings by LEWO vessels are not shown by port because of confidentiality reasons (i.e. fewer than 3 vessels per port)

Alternatives

- Alternative 1
  - No action, maintain current CSP
- Alternative 2
  - Transfer a portion of the non-tribal directed fishery quota to the sablefish fishery, to allow retention of halibut bycatch
    - Option 1: 5% quota transfer
    - Option 2: 25% quota transfer
    - Option 3: 50% quota transfer
    - Option 4: 100% quota transfer

Alternatives—cont.

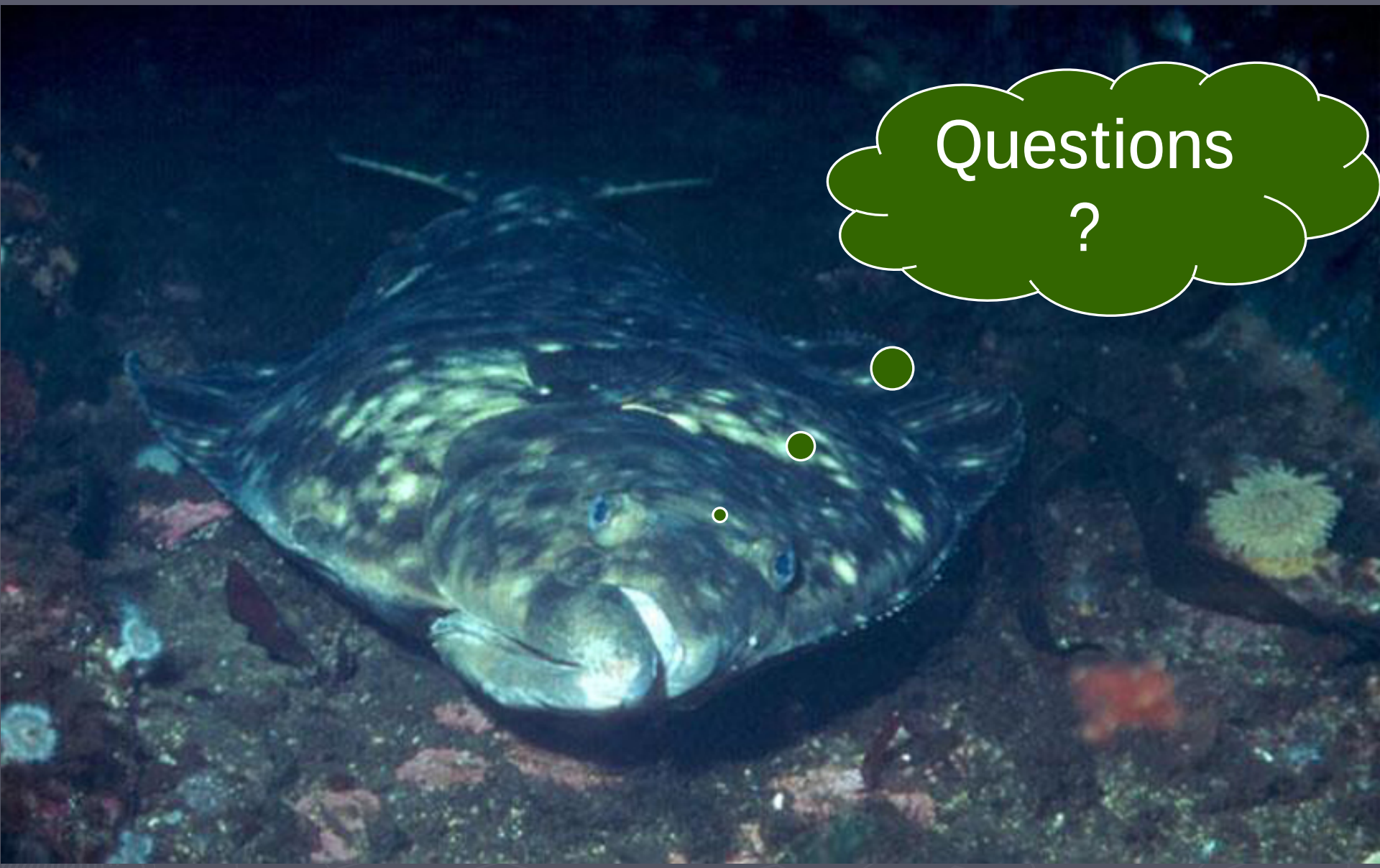
- Alternative 3
  - Transfer a portion of the non-tribal directed fishery quota to the sablefish fishery, to allow retention of halibut bycatch, contingent on the Area 2A TAC (directed fishery allocation)
    - If the directed fishery allocation is greater than 200,000 lbs, any quota in excess of 200,000 lbs will be transferred to the sablefish fishery (“high trigger”)
    - If the directed fishery allocation is less than 150,000 lbs, 100% of the directed fishery allocation will be transferred to the sablefish fishery (“low trigger”)
    - If the directed fishery allocation is between 150,000 lbs and 200,000 lbs, no transfer of allocation; directed fishery only

Other Considerations

- CPUE from the directed halibut fishery is used in the halibut stock assessment by IPHC
- Biological data is collected from the directed commercial fishery, for use in stock assessment
  - Lengths
  - Otoliths for ageing
- Would only be able to occur during the commercial halibut fishery season, set by IPHC
  - Usually mid-March to mid-November
    - March 12-November 18 in 2011
  - Not year round

Other Considerations

- How do we minimize change in behavior (i.e. halibut targeting)
  - set up trip/landing limits (similar to the salmon troll fishery)?
  - Minimize additional impacts to OFS
  - How do we model those impacts?
- RCA structure
- Gear differences between “sablefish gear” and “halibut gear”
- Some minimal catch of halibut below 40-10, so look at this coastwide, not just north of 40-10—from GAP
- What about trawl IQ, gear switching to fixed gear, would they be allowed to keep halibut too?
- Puts into the pool of observer coverage, more halibut effort covered by observers
- Tracking mechanism, to ensure quota not exceeded


Questions
?

Corrections to "Initial Consideration of Proposed Changes to Pacific Halibut Allocation for Bycatch and Catch Sharing in the Groundfish Fisheries"

Since submitting the report under Agenda Item F.3, staff with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) have continued to review information and analysis. During this time, updates to tables included in Agenda Item F.3, ODFW Report were necessary. This has resulted in the following replacement tables.

Table 3-1 on page 8 shows the number of landings from the directed halibut fishery, not the number of vessels, as in the title. The table below includes both the number of vessels and the number of landings.

Table 3-1. Number of vessels participating in the directed halibut fishery in PFMC Areas 2A, 2B, 2E, with landings in Oregon, 2005-2010.

Year	Halibut Vessels	Halibut Landings
2005	55	163
2006	67	291
2007	68	174
2008	70	207
2009	70	178

Table 3-3 on page 11 has been updated after discovering some coding errors in the database used to create the table. The corrected table is below:

Table 3-3. Number of vessels with directed halibut permits that made landings north of 40° 30' N latitude to 46° 53' N latitude (Pt. Chehalis) for Pacific halibut, and/or LEW (limited entry fixed gear with sablefish endorsement), and/or LEWO (limited entry fixed gear without sablefish endorsement), and/or OA (open access fixed gear sablefish), January 1-December 31, 2009.

	Halibut	LEW	LEWO	OA	**Total**
Halibut	131	24	---	75	**230**
LEW	24	37	---	---	**61**
LEWO	---	---	3	---	**3**
OA	75	---	---	69	**144**
Total	**230**	**61**	**3**	**144**	**438**

Table 3-4 on page 12 has been updated with one change to the number of landings in Crescent City/Trinidad.

Table 3-4. Number of sablefish landings by port for LEW and OA north of 40° 10' N latitude to 46° 53' N latitude are shown, January 1-December 31, 2009. Only 17 landings were made for LEWO, and are therefore not shown in the table.

Port	LEW	LEWO	OA
Westport	53		26
Illwaco/Willapa Bay	49		120
Astoria/Tillamook	49		55
Newport/Wincheter Bay/ Florence	189		125
Coos Bay	49		317
Port Orford	289		357
Brookings	24		20
Crescent City/Trinidad	63		67
Eureka	134		148
Total	**899**	**17**	**1,236**

Vessels that were reported to hold both OA and LEW permits were tallied under the LEW column

Landings by LEWO vessels are not shown by port because of confidentiality reasons (i.e. fewer than 3 vessels per port)

PFMC
03/07/11

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES FOR INCIDENTAL CATCH RETENTION OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN THE LIMITED ENTRY AND OPEN ACCESS FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a detailed report from Ms. Lynn Mattes from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding agenda item F.2. The GAP would like to thank Ms. Mattes for a very complete report and a briefing on several alternatives that were developed.

The GAP recommends the alternatives for allowing retention of Pacific Halibut in the limited entry (LE) and open access (OA) fixed gear sablefish fisheries be approved for the next level of analysis. The GAP members have the following thoughts about what should be included in the next analysis.

The GAP discussions identified three LE and OA directed sablefish activities authorized by the Council that would claim the need for retention of Pacific Halibut bycatch and require inclusion into the analyis of alternatives. Those sablefish fisheries are the OA daily-trip-limit (DTL) fishery, the LE DTL fishery, and the LE primary fishery. Halibut would be allowed potentially as a bycatch in each of these fisheries. Halibut would be reallocated from the current directed halibut fishery to the fisheries mentioned above. The GAP identified five user groups with some vessel crossover between fisheries that would have to be analyzed.

The next analysis should provide some discussion on the following concerns:

1. The fixed gear GAP members note that future analysis will need to recognize that the halibut gear used in the directed derby fishery may be of a different design (e.g., different sized hooks) than the longline gear used to target sablefish. Vessels in Alaska that use their sablefish gear with smaller hooks to target their individual fishing quota (IFQ) halibut usually catch a smaller size halibut due to hook size. This may or may not be a concern.
2. The amount of allowed bycatch should reflect as close as possible the actual bycatch rates relative to existing fixed gear rockfish conservation areas in order avoid an incentive to target Pacific halibut.
3. The analysis needs to focus on whether the bycatch retention design would actually result in a halibut mortality savings, keeping mind that retained halibut are being transferred from a directed halibut fishery. This proposal should not result in increased mortality relative to the current directed derby and would avoid some of the existing discard mortality in sablefish fisheries.
4. Retention of Pacific halibut in sablefish fisheries south of 40°10’ N. latitude should be explored in the analysis.

The GAP puts a higher priority on completing trawl IFQ trailing amendments and other ongoing initiatives approved previously by the Council (e.g., Amendment 16-5) before dedicating Council staff time to this proposed amendment.

PFMC 03/08/11

GROUNDFISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES FOR INCIDENTAL CATCH RETENTION OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN THE LIMITED ENTRY AND OPEN ACCESS FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) report (Agenda Item F.3.b, ODFW Report), and received a briefing by ODFW staff and offers the following comments and considerations.

Considerations of the Purpose and the Need

This subject was initiated in response to an industry request to transfer 5% of the non-tribal directed Pacific halibut (halibut) fishery quota to allow for incidental halibut retention in the limited entry (LE) sablefish primary fishery, LE sablefish daily trip limit (DTL) fishery, and open access (OA) sablefish DTL fishery in the area between 40°10' N. lat. and Point Chehalis (46°53.30' N. lat.), Washington.

The purpose and need is based on the management/policy objectives, legal requirements, and other evaluation criteria and factors that are important to the decision-makers. These factors include the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) significant impact to the human environment, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) regulations, and the Area 2A Halibut Catch Sharing Plan (CSP).

The ODFW report states that at least part of the purpose is to utilize the available halibut resource in a more economically efficient manner. As the directed fishery has been reduced to only a couple of days in recent years (one ten-hour opening in 2010), there may be a need to consider changes in how the non-tribal directed halibut fishery quota is allocated. Industry may be able to provide more information concerning at what level of halibut quota (and associated season length and trip limits) it is no longer economically viable to participate in the directed fishery.

A transfer of a portion of the directed fishery halibut quota to the sablefish fishery could benefit other users of the halibut resource by allowing incidentally caught halibut to be converted from discarded halibut into retained halibut. Additional economic benefits could be realized by providing fresh halibut throughout the year rather than in short pulses. However, the benefit to participants in the sablefish fishery may come at the cost to others such as participants in the non-tribal directed halibut fishery or processors that are set up to handle the current derby-style directed fishery (Agenda Item F.3.b ODFW Report, March 2011).

Industry, the Public and the Council may also have other thoughts on purpose and need to develop this action, should it move forward.

Considerations on alternatives

The range of alternatives is designed to compare and contrast options compared to No Action, and the range is developed based on the purpose and need.

The ODFW report provided an initial range of alternatives that includes No Action, an alternative that provides options for transferring a fixed percentage of the directed halibut fishery quota for incidental halibut retention in sablefish fisheries and an alternative that allows for incidental halibut retention when the directed halibut fishery quota is at certain levels.

When considering the alternatives, mentioned in the ODFW report, or any additional alternatives, the Council may wish to consider the following relative to the potential scope of action:

- What areas of the coastal non-trawl sablefish fishery to include in the halibut retention allowance (e.g. the request to go as far south as 36° N. lat.)?
- Individual retention amounts that may prevent targeting (by area or gear adjustments).
- Consideration of different sectors that would be allowed to retain halibut. (E.g., are considerations needed for vessels that are operating under gear-switching provisions to use non-trawl gear to fish their individual fishing quotas?)

The GMT notes that all of the action alternatives may need to consider impacts such as:

- Potential for changes in fishing behavior by the sablefish vessels (e.g., targeting halibut)
- Changes in bycatch of overfished groundfish species caught incidentally in the non-trawl sablefish fisheries. The GMT notes that some information from the incidental retention fishery north of Point Chehalis may be available to help inform potential impacts.
- Potential for changes in the level of participation in the open access sablefish fishery if halibut retention is allowed.
- Changes to data available for the IPHC halibut stock assessment, such as weight per unit effort (WPUE) and age and length data from the directed fishery.

Considerations for content of a NEPA compliant decision document

The Council and its advisory bodies will need input from the NMFS Northwest Region on any other considerations for what should be included in an analysis document.

Considerations for schedule and process expectations

The GMT notes that if this issue moves forward through the Council process, there may be a need for the Council to consider the distribution and magnitude of workload and timing of implementation relative to other actions (including regulatory changes, FMP amendments, the biennial SPEX process, etc.). The Council will also need to consider how this fits in with the timing and content of the CSP.

PFMC
03/09/11

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY A CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA

AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DIRECTOR
BRUCE M. LEAMAN

P.O. BOX 95009
SEATTLE, WA 98145-2009

TELEPHONE
(206) 634-1838

FAX:
(206) 632-2983

March 1, 2011

Mr. Mark Cedergreen
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Re: March 2011Meeting, Agenda Item F.3: ODFW Report

Dear Mark,

The staff of the International Pacific Halibut Commission has reviewed the ODFW Report for Initial Consideration of Proposed Changes to Pacific Halibut Allocation for Bycatch and Catch Sharing in the Groundfish Fisheries.

Allocation of removals within the overall IPHC catch limit for Area 2A is clearly the purview of the Council and the Commission has no wish to interfere with that process. However, we would like to make you aware of the potential impacts on Commission activities of some of the options in the proposed changes. If an option to eliminate or largely reduce the directed commercial halibut fishery is supported, it will seriously impact the contribution of Area 2A commercial fishery data to the Commission's coastwide stock assessment data set. Currently, commercial weight per unit effort (WPUE) is derived from logbook data collected throughout Washington and Oregon, from the directed treaty and nontreaty commercial fisheries. If commercial WPUE data for a directed fishery in the southern area were not available we would have an incomplete picture of the commercial WPUE for the coastwide assessment. The issue is that data from bycatch-only fisheries such as the sablefish fishery are not useful as a stock index. In addition, biological sampling from the incidental fishery may not be representative of the bulk of the exploitable biomass if the fish are obtained from areas or depths that are primarily sablefish habitat. Finally, we would also need to revise our port sampling program to obtain biological data from sporadic, coastwide landings in an incidental fishery. The costs of that revised program are not currently clear and we would need to understand the temporal distribution of sablefish landings to estimate those costs.

We also note that data provided in the ODFW Report is for only the Oregon portion of the directed nontreaty commercial fishery and additional vessels that fish and landings in southern Washington would be affected. We did clarify with ODFW that Table 3.1 provides the number of landings and not the number of vessels that participated in the Oregon directed halibut fishery. If this proposal moves forward, we can work with Council or agency staff to provide halibut fishery data or verify any of the data in future reports.

Retention of halibut within the sablefish fishery could only be allowed within the commercial halibut fishing season, which is set by IPHC and has generally occurred from March to November in recent years. The Council and NMFS could adopt more restrictive commercial fishing dates within that time frame, if desired.

As we have previously recommended, any consideration for allowing retention of incidental halibut within the groundfish fisheries should be handled solely within the Council's Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, where all other retained harvests are managed.

IPHC staff will be attending the March meeting and can address any questions the Council may have about our comments. In addition, I will be attending your meeting on Saturday March 5th and would be pleased to present a report on the Commission's Annual Meeting and issues of relevance to Area 2A.

Sincerely,

Bruce M. Leaman
Executive Director

cc: Commissioners

Agenda Item F.3.d
Supplemental Public Comment
March 2011

Subject: Fwd: halibut bycatch
From: "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>
Date: Tue, 22 Feb 2011 08:26:12 -0800
To: Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

-------- Original Message --------
Subject:halibut bycatch
Date: Sun, 20 Feb 2011 13:36:32 -0800
From: Case Charles <chuck2006@wildblue.net>
To:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov, craig.d.good@state.or.us

Dear Pacific Fisheries Managment Council,

My name is Charles Case. I am a fisherman out of Port Orford, Oregon. I have 3 boats and permits for the longline sablefish fishery. At times there are bycatch halibut in the course of pursuing the sablefish. At this time we are not allowed to retain the halibut but must release them. I feel that it would be a better use of the accidental bycatch of halibut to allow them to be kept and taken to market, as often they do not survive once released, their mouths are damaged and they will subsequently die upon release. When targeting the blackcod there is usually not many halibut caought by accident so I do not fell that it will have a great or negative impact to the halibut population.

Sincerely,

Charles Case
(541)253-6883
(707)621-1978

Subject: Fwd: halibut bycaych retention.
From: "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>
Date: Tue, 22 Feb 2011 08:25:49 -0800
To: Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

-------- Original Message --------
Subject:halibut bycaych retention.
Date: Sun, 20 Feb 2011 09:37:37 -0800 (PST)
From:brett webb <brettwebb13@yahoo.com>
To:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

council, please consider bycatch retention for halibut, for all groundfish participants in the 2A(non tribal) area. as a groundfish participant i am aware of mortality rates for halibut,and it seems a crime to kill fish unintentionally,then later,go target the same fish. often in unsafe, derby conditions. i do think it is sound management to take halibut thru the year,here and there,and avoid the rockcod bycatch when targeting halibut,pushing near closed grounds. in my opinion,all groundfishers,endorsed,unendorsed,and open access should be included in any changes to policy.. thank you for your consideration.
Brett Webb. f/v Moxie,port orford OR