

REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION (IPHC)  
MEETING

The 2017 Annual Meeting of the IPHC was held in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, January 23-27, 2017. The most significant outcome of the meeting was setting the 2017 catch limits (Agenda Item H.1.a, IPHC News Release), which involved consideration of the probabilities of risks and benefits involved with specific harvest choices. Discussions also focused on harvest policy and methods for distributing or apportioning coastwide yield to regulatory area. The Area 2A catch limit for Pacific halibut is 1.33 million pounds (Agenda Item H.1, Attachment 1), which is 190,000 pounds greater than the 2016 limit.

Under this agenda item, Dr. Dave Wilson, the Executive Director of the IPHC will provide an overview of the Annual Meeting, stock assessment, and plans for expanding the Pacific halibut stock assessment survey in northern Washington and northern California.

Mr. Phil Anderson, the Council's representative to the IPHC, attended the Annual Meeting, along with numerous other interested parties from Area 2A. Mr. Anderson provided a brief summary of the discussions and results of the meeting for Council consideration (Agenda Item H.1.b, IPHC Representative Report). Additionally, Ms. Michele Culver, the Council's representative to the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB), prepared an update on the MSAB progress and plans for revising the Commission's harvest policy and apportionment methodology.

Also included in the reference materials are letters from the IPHC to the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding preliminary estimates and final values of the Area 2A total constant exploitation yield to facilitate issuance of individual bycatch quota (IBQ) for Pacific halibut in the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota Program (Agenda Item H.1.a, IPHC Letters RE IBQ).

*Update on the Council's Pacific Halibut Data Request*

At its June 2016 meeting, the Council began scoping to determine whether greater changes to future Catch Sharing Plan allocations are appropriate. As a first step, the Council requested additional information on the spatial distribution of the Pacific halibut exploitable biomass in Area 2A. Council staff have requested assistance from the IPHC in developing an analysis that would provide such information for Council consideration at the June 2017 Council meeting in Spokane, Washington. The IPHC has offered to provide survey data from Area 2A stratified by state boundaries as well as biomass estimates with estimates of uncertainty at smaller spatial scales than IPHC regulatory area ([Agenda Item I.1.a, IPHC Report, September 2016](#)). The Council should consider the available information and determine whether additional data products should be requested for Council consideration at their June 2017 meeting.

**Council Action:**

**Discuss information relative to Area 2A Pacific halibut fisheries.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.1, Attachment 1: 2017 Area 2A Pacific Halibut Allocations.
2. Agenda Item H.1.a, IPHC News Release: International Pacific Halibut Commission Announces 2017 Catch Limits and Seasons.
3. Agenda Item H.1.a, IPHC Letters RE IBQ: Preliminary and Final Estimates of the Total Constant Exploitation Yield for Pacific Halibut in Area 2A.
4. Agenda Item H.1.b, IPHC Representative Report: Report on the 2017 International Pacific Halibut Commission Annual Meeting.
5. Agenda Item H.1.b, MSAB Representative Report: Update on the Management Strategy Evaluation Process for Pacific Halibut.

Agenda Order:

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|---|----------------------------------|
| H.1 Report on the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Meeting | Kelly Ames                       |
| a. IPHC Report  | Dave Wilson                      |
| b. Council IPHC Representative Report                                     | Phil Anderson and Michele Culver |
| c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities        |                                  |
| d. Public Comment   |                                  |
| e. <b>Council Action:</b> Consideration of the IPHC Meeting Reports       |                                  |

PFMC  
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