

COMMERCIAL DIRECTED FISHERY WORKSHOP PLANNING

The Area 2A Non-Indian Commercial Directed Pacific Halibut Fishery (fishery) structure has been a topic of discussion between the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) since May 2017, when the Council received a letter from the IPHC recommending the Council consider a change in the management of the fishery. The IPHC outlined their concerns and provided a list of potential benefits for such a change. The IPHC did not recommend a particular management structure for the fishery, but supported changes that would reduce the concentration of fishing effort and eliminate a ‘race for fish.’ The IPHC also recognized the challenges in developing a new management structure for this fishery, and that it would take some time to develop and implement across multiple agencies.

The Council has been engaged in discussions regarding this topic since the June 2017 Council meeting. Council discussions have included data analysis, advisory body input, and public comment. The Council acknowledged in 2017 that this topic would require dedicated time and focus to investigate alternative management structures and their implications to the fishery and the participants. The Council also recognized that given the current workload and funding, it was unlikely the Council would be able to provide any recommendations for change during the course of 2018.

At the November 2018 Council meeting, the IPHC provided a copy of a proposal ([Agenda Item F.1.a, Supplemental IPHC Report 1](#)) submitted to IPHC commissioners for consideration. In response, the Council developed a list of issues and concerns regarding changes to the fishery that should be addressed prior to implementing such a change. NMFS suggested holding a workshop in 2019 in order to look at this fishery in a more holistic way. Such a workshop would provide opportunity for stakeholders and management entities to address concerns and explore alternatives in management of this particular fishery.

The Council submitted a [letter](#) for the IPHC interim meeting that lists a number of issues and concerns regarding the effects of a potential change, and suggests that the concerns are addressed prior to implementing change. IPHC responded to the Council’s letter, and the topic was further discussed at the IPHC annual meeting in January 2019.

At the March 2019 meeting, the Council agreed that a halibut workshop would provide a venue to discuss the issues and concerns identified by the Council. The Council directed Council members and staff (aka workgroup) to develop recommendations for the scope of the workshop and provide a [joint staff report](#) at the April 2019 Council meeting. At the April meeting, Council discussions included the potential transition of management of this fishery from IPHC to the Council and NMFS, and limiting the scope of the workshop to focus on the upcoming 2020 season. To help inform the Council on these two topics, the Council directed leadership to express to IPHC the Council’s intent to consider a transition of management of the fishery and tasked the workgroup with providing a report (Attachment 1) on the scoping and logistics of potentially developing a transition plan.

Council Action:

- 1. Consider a Process for Transitioning Management Authority of the Commercial Directed Fishery from the International Pacific Halibut Commission to the Council**
- 2. Provide Guidance on the Purpose and Scope of a Future Stakeholder Workshop on Regulatory Alternatives for the 2020 Fishery**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.1, Attachment 1: Workgroup Report on the Commercial Directed Fishery: Transition Process and Workshop Planning.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- H.1 Commercial Directed Fishery Transition Process and Workshop Planning Robin Ehlke
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Consider a Process for Transitioning Management Authority of the Commercial Directed Fishery from the International Pacific Halibut Commission to the Council and Provide Guidance on the Purpose and Scope of a Future Stakeholder Workshop on Regulatory Alternatives for the 2020 Fishery

PFMC
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