

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON UPDATE ON REVIEW OF PACIFIC
HALIBUT MANAGEMENT UNDER THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
(NEPA) AND STATUS OF PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES FOR INCIDENTAL CATCH
RETENTION OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN THE LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR
SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report from Mr. Kevin Duffy of NMFS regarding this agenda item. It was discussed that the GAP has in the past (March 2011) supported analysis of this proposal. The GAP continues to support the proposal as defined by the statement contained in Agenda Item H.3.b, NMFS Report; “Discontinue any further exploration of incidental catch retention of halibut in the sablefish Open Access fisheries, but continue to explore incidental catch retention in the limited entry fixed gear sablefish fishery south of Point Chehalis in a manner that does not result in increased yelloweye rockfish mortality.”

The GAP does not believe that this issue should receive a higher priority than others currently on the Council agenda. Completion of current trawl individual fishing quota trailing amendments, for example, and other ongoing initiatives approved previously by the Council should be completed before dedicating Council staff time to this proposed amendment.

PFMC
03/05/12