



Report of the 99th Session of the IPHC Interim Meeting (IM099)

Meeting held electronically, 30 November – 1 December 2023

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ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AM	Annual Meeting
CB	Conference Board
CV	Coefficient of Variation
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Ocean (Canada)
FISS	Fishery-Independent Setline Survey
FY	Financial Year
IM	Interim Meeting
IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission
MSAB	Management Strategy Advisory Board
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (USA)
O32	Over 32 inches (fish)
RAB	Research Advisory Board
RFT	Request For Tender
SB	Spawning Biomass
SRB	Scientific Review Board
TCEY	Total Constant Exploitation Yield
U32	Under 32 inches (fish)
WPUE	Weight Per Unit Effort

DEFINITIONS

A set of working definitions are provided in the IPHC Glossary of Terms and abbreviations: <https://www.iphc.int/the-commission/glossary-of-terms-and-abbreviations>

HOW TO INTERPRET TERMINOLOGY CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT

This report has been written using the following terms and associated definitions so as to remove ambiguity surrounding how particular paragraphs should be interpreted.

- Level 1:** **RECOMMENDED; RECOMMENDATION; ADOPTED** (formal); **REQUESTED; ENDORSED; ACCEPTED** (informal): A conclusion for an action to be undertaken, by a Contracting Party, a subsidiary (advisory) body of the Commission and/or the IPHC Secretariat.
- Level 2:** **AGREED:** Any point of discussion from a meeting which the Commission considers to be an agreed course of action covered by its mandate, which has not already been dealt with under Level 1 above; a general point of agreement among delegations/participants of a meeting which does not need to be elevated in the Commission's reporting structure.
- Level 3:** **NOTED/NOTING; CONSIDERED; URGED; ACKNOWLEDGED:** General terms to be used for consistency. Any point of discussion from a meeting which the Commission considers to be important enough to record in a meeting report for future reference. Any other term may be used to highlight to the reader of an IPHC report, the importance of the relevant paragraph. Other terms may be used but will be considered for explanatory/informational purposes only and shall have no higher rating within the reporting terminology hierarchy than Level 3.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 99th Session of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Interim Meeting (IM099) was held electronically from 30 November to 1 December 2023. A total of 17 members (6 Commissioners; 11 advisors/experts) attended the Session from the two (2) Contracting Parties, as well as 77 observers. The meeting was opened by the Chairperson, Mr Jon Kurland (USA), who welcomed participants.

The following are a subset of the complete recommendations and requests for action from the IM099, which are provided at [Appendix V](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Report of the 24th Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB024)

IM099-Rec.01 ([para. 13](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat investigate avenues for leveraging external co-funding from granting agencies, industry, and other sources, to undertake research aimed at fishing technological advances that would benefit Pacific halibut fisheries/sectors.

International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-year program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26)

IM099-Rec.02 ([para. 15](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat add commentary on the importance / likely effects on the stock assessment of each research area within section “6.1.3 Biology and Ecology.”

IM099-Rec.03 ([para. 16](#)) The Commission **AGREED** that leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) has substantial potential to bring efficiencies and other benefits to the IPHC’s research and monitoring activities. Accordingly, the Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat explore potential applications of AI across the broad range of research and monitoring activities outlined in the IPHC’s 5-Year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring. This exploration should include identification of lessons to be learned and opportunities that AI might present for the IPHC's activities.

IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update

IM099-Rec.04 ([para. 36](#)) **NOTING** the current priority objectives, the Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat, working with the MSAB and SRB, explore the development of a new coastwide objective related to absolute spawning biomass or catch-rates, to either replace the current B36% objective or be added as a fifth priority objective. The Secretariat supports developing a new objective for the Commission to decide if it is a useful objective to assist in determining an MP that optimizes yield via optimal catch-rates or opportunity.

Report on Current and Future Biological and Ecosystem Science Research Activities

IM099-Rec.05 ([para. 64](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat add commentary on the importance / likely effects on the stock assessment when presenting of on each of the primary biological research activities.

IPHC Fishery regulations: Proposals for the 2023-24 process

IM099-Rec.06 ([para. 66](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that interested stakeholders note the deadline for submission of IPHC Fishery Regulation proposals, for consideration at the 100th Session of the Annual Meeting (AM100), of **23 December 2023**. Late proposals will not be considered at AM100, but stakeholders may also submit statements up until the day before the AM100. More information is available via the updated IPHC website: <https://iphc.int/the-commission/fishery-regulations/>.

In addition, the Commission reached the following agreement regarding the 2024 FISS:

(para. 51) The Commission **AGREED** on an optimized design for the 2024 FISS as provided at [Appendix IV](#), that balances the Commission's primary and secondary objectives for the FISS. Specifically, the 2024 design shall include Options 1, 2, and 3 from [Table 2](#). In addition, Option 4 shall be included in the RFT process but is not yet endorsed. Once bids are received and evaluated in February 2024, the Commission will make a final decision on whether to proceed or not with Option 4, based on bids and logistical constraints at that time and potentially a new option for IPhC Regulatory Area 4CDE.

1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The 99th Session of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Interim Meeting (IM099) was held electronically from 30 November to 1 December 2023. A total of 17 members (6 Commissioners; 11 credentialed advisors/experts) attended the Session from the two (2) Contracting Parties, as well as 77 observers. The list of participants is provided at [Appendix I](#). The meeting was opened by the Chairperson, Mr Jon Kurland (USA), who welcomed participants.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

2. The Commission **ADOPTED** the Agenda as provided at [Appendix II](#). The documents provided to the IM099 are listed in [Appendix III](#).

3. IPHC PROCESS

3.1 *Update on actions arising from the 99th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099), 2023 Special Sessions, and intersessional decisions*

3. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-03](#) that provided an opportunity to consider the progress made during the intersessional period in relation to the direct requests for action by the Commission during the 99th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099, January 2023), 2023 Special Sessions, and intersessional decisions.
4. The Commission **AGREED** to consider and revise as necessary, the actions arising, and for these to be combined with any new actions arising from the IM099.

3.2 *Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2023): Draft*

5. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-04](#) that provided the Commission with a draft update on the activities of the IPHC Secretariat in 2023, not already contained within other papers before the Commission.

3.3 *2nd IPHC Performance Review (PRIPHC02): Implementation of recommendations*

6. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-05](#), that provided the Commission with an update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the 2nd Performance Review of the IPHC (PRIPHC02).
7. The Commission **RECALLED** recommendation 09 from the PRIPHC02 (shown below) and **NOTED** that while there was no current agreement between the Contracting Parties to collectively move this recommendation forward, the Commission would continue discussions to seek common ground.

PRIPHC02-Rec.09: “The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat, in consultation with the Commission, develop minimum data collection standards for Pacific halibut by scientific observer programs. The intention would be for the Commission to review and approve the minimum standards, and recommend them for implementation by domestic agencies.”

3.4 *Report of the 18th Session of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB018) (Co-Chairpersons)*

8. The Commission **NOTED** the Report of the 18th Session of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB018) ([IPHC-2023-MSAB018-R](#)) that was held from 24-25 May 2023.

3.5 *Reports of the Scientific Review Board (SRB)*

9. The Commission **NOTED** the Reports of the 22nd and 23rd Sessions of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB022: [IPHC-2023-SRB022-R](#); SRB023: [IPHC-2023-SRB023-R](#)) that were presented by the SRB Chairperson, Dr Sean Cox.

3.6 *Report of the 24th Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB024)*

10. The Commission **NOTED** the Report of the 24th Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB024) ([IPHC-2023-RAB024-R](#)) that was held on 28 November 2023.
11. The Commission **NOTED** the range of actions put forward by the RAB and **AGREED** to take them into consideration as part of their deliberations at IM099 and AM100 (refer to applicable sections throughout this report for specific actions).
12. The Commission **NOTED** that the IPHC Secretariat will be undertaking a desktop study to examine the benefits and risks of vessel captain stations and bait usage changes, and that these will be presented to the RAB and Commission by AM100.
13. The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat investigate avenues for leveraging external co-funding from granting agencies, industry, and other sources, to undertake research aimed at fishing technological advances that would benefit Pacific halibut fisheries/sectors.

3.7 *International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-year program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26)*

14. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-06](#), that provided the Commission with an opportunity to comment and amend the IPHC's 5-year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26) (the Plan).
15. The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat add commentary on the importance / likely effects on the stock assessment of each research area within section "6.1.3 Biology and Ecology."
16. The Commission **AGREED** that leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) has substantial potential to bring efficiencies and other benefits to the IPHC's research and monitoring activities. Accordingly, the Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat explore potential applications of AI across the broad range of research and monitoring activities outlined in the IPHC's 5-Year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring. This exploration should include identification of lessons to be learned and opportunities that AI might present for the IPHC's activities.

4. FISHERY MONITORING

4.1 *Fishery-dependent data overview (2023)*

17. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-07 Rev 2](#) that provided a preliminary overview of the 2023 Pacific halibut removals, including the status of mortality reported against fishery limits adopted by the Commission and outlined in the IPHC Fishery Regulations (2023).
18. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-INF02](#), that provides the Commission with an overview of steps taken to improve the overall quality and usability of publicly available IPHC data products.
19. The Commission **REQUESTED** that moving forward, the presentation associated with the fishery-dependent data overview paper, include a comparison of the current year values for each sector with those from the previous year.

4.2 *Fishery-independent data overview (2023)*

4.2.1 *IPHC Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2023*

20. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-08](#) that provided an overview of the IPHC Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2023.
21. The Commission **RECALLED** that the annual IPHC FISS of the Pacific halibut stock consists of a standard grid in all IPHC Regulatory Areas, and totals 1,890 stations (the full FISS design) ([Fig. 1](#)), within the prescribed depth range of 18 to 732 metres (10 to 400 fathoms).
22. The Commission **RECALLED** that at the 98th Session of the IPHC Interim Meeting (IM098), the Commission recommended a FISS design for 2023 that included 958 stations coastwide ([Fig. 2](#)). The

design comprised sampling of subareas within IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, and 4B intended to balance the Commission's primary and secondary objectives for the FISS. 2023 sampling in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C included 100% of the full FISS design.

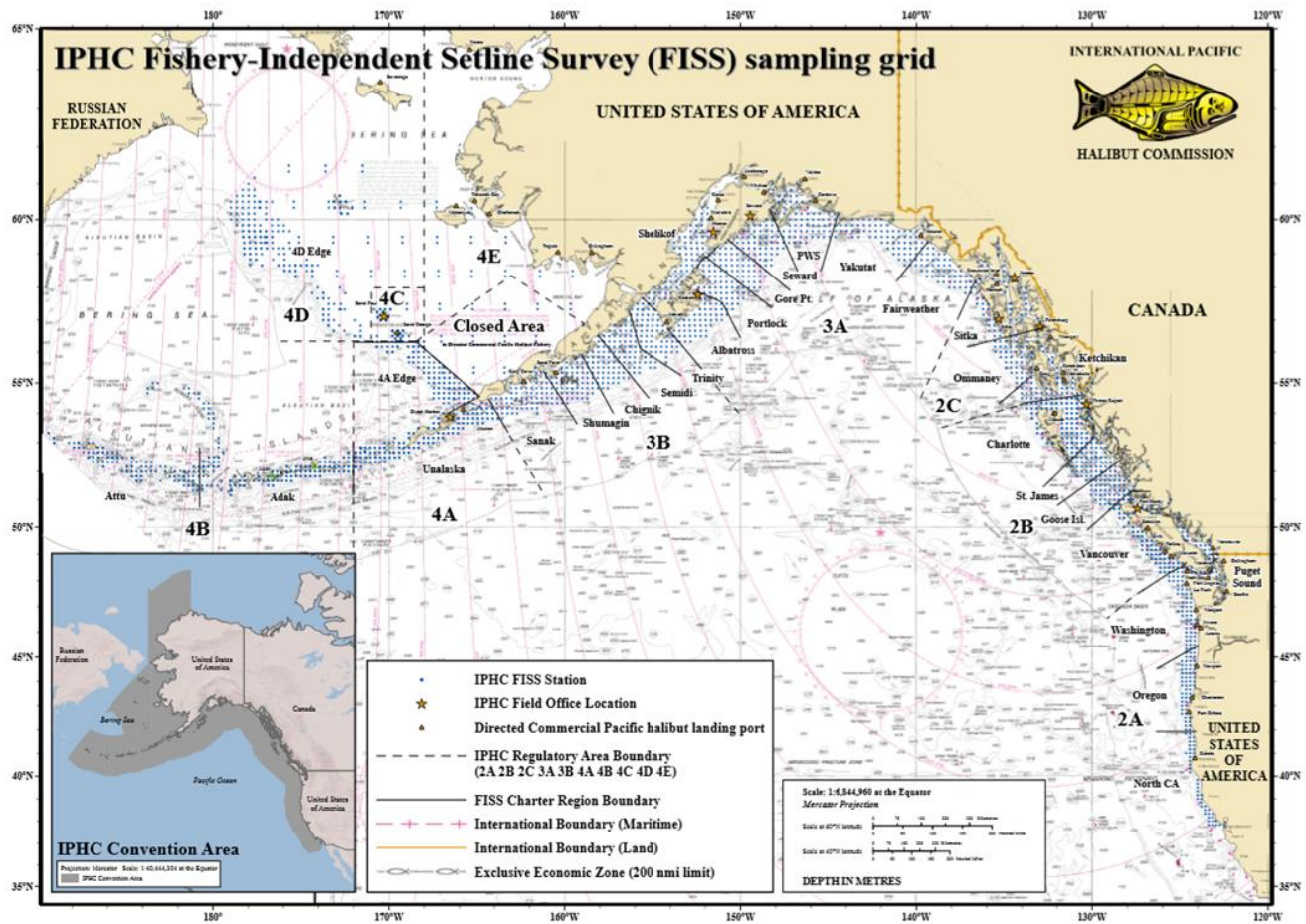


Figure 1. IPHC Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) with full sampling grid shown.

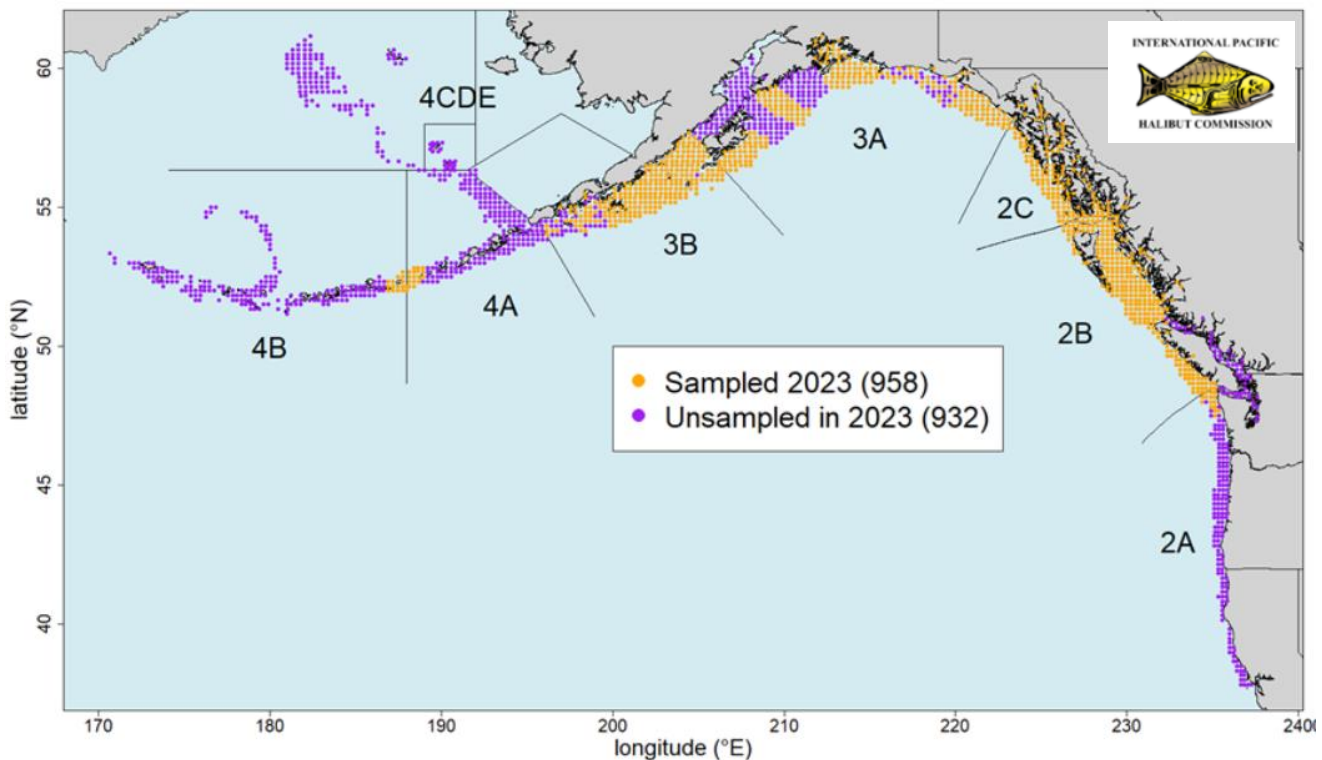


Figure 2. Map of the 2023 FISS design endorsed by the Commission on 1 December 2022 ([IPHC-2022-IM098-R](#)). Purple circles were not to be sampled in 2023.

23. The Commission **REQUESTED** that, moving forward, a map similar to Fig.2, but of stations that were realized during the sampling season be presented and included in the meeting report, with ineffective stations being identified separately from those sampled (via a third colour or icon).
24. The Commission **NOTED** that the interactive views of the 2023 FISS results (including all prior years) were made publicly available via the IPHC website on 31 October 2023: <https://www.iphc.int/data/fiss-catch-per-unit-effort/>.
25. The Commission **NOTED** the updated fish sale process in which bidding for fish caught in the FISS is opened to various ports to increase competition for best price available, and that this has provided the opportunity to increase revenues and partially offset the cost of the FISS.
26. The Commission **NOTED** the increase in ineffective stations due to logistical reasons, which is generally due to weather/other natural circumstances and considered to be less often due to vessel inexperience in the FISS.

5. STOCK STATUS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT (2023)

5.1 Space-time modelling of survey data

27. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-09 Rev 1](#) that provided the results of the space time modelling of Pacific halibut survey data for the period 1993-2023.
28. The Commission **NOTED** [Figure 3](#) which shows the time series estimates of O32 WPUE (most comparable to fishery catch-rates) over the 1993-2023 period included in the 2023 space-time modelling. Overall, there was an estimated decrease of 3% in the coastwide O32 WPUE index from 2022, due largely to a 6% decline in Region 3 ([Fig. 3](#)).
29. The Commission **NOTED** the indication from the IPHC Secretariat that there was no immediate need for further gear (snap vs fixed) comparison studies, as both snap and fixed gear vessels were actively participating in the annual FISS. Any further calibration of the two gears would be undertaken on an ongoing basis in real-time, rather than as a separate, dedicated study.

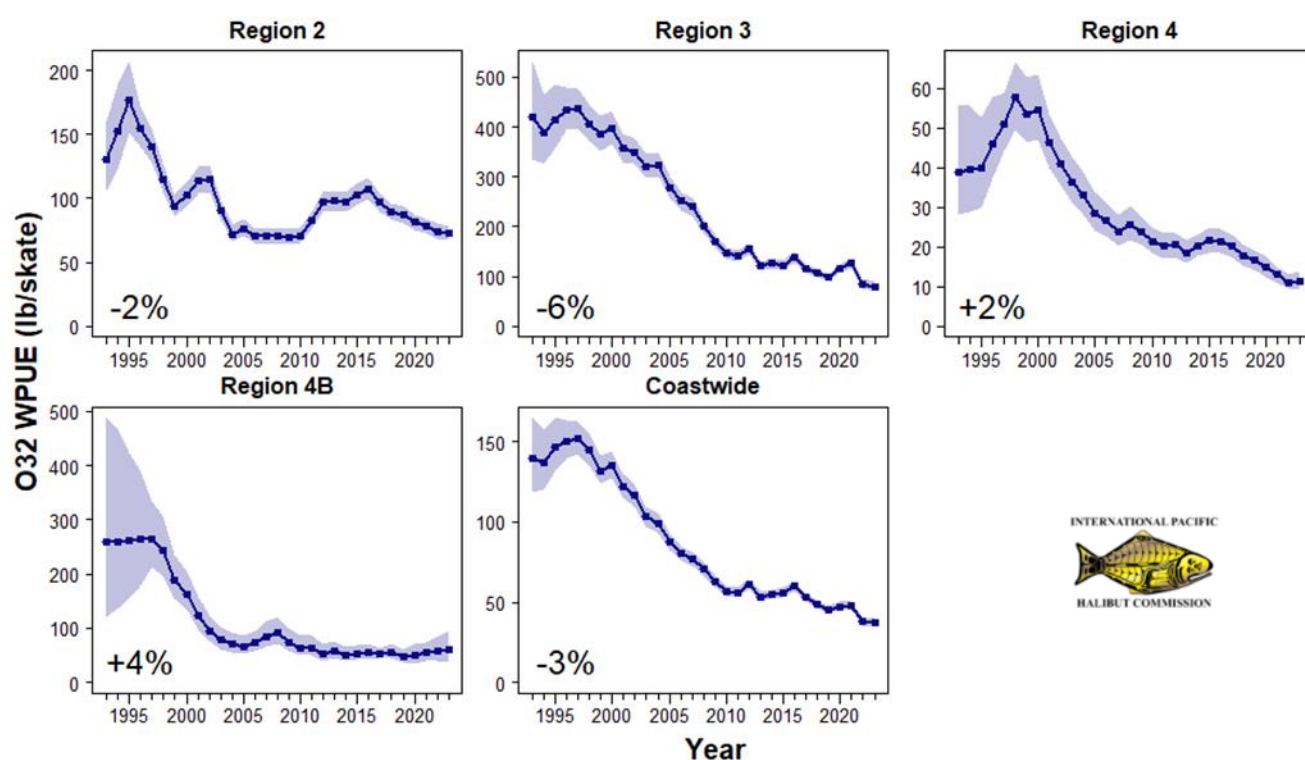


Figure 3. Space-time model output for O32 WPUE for 1993-2023 for Biological Regions. Filled circles denote the posterior means of O32 WPUE for each year. Shaded regions show posterior 95% credible intervals, which provide a measure of uncertainty: the wider the shaded interval, the greater the uncertainty in the estimate. Numeric values in the lower left-hand corners are estimates of the change in mean O32 WPUE from 2022 to 2023.

5.2 Stock Assessment: Data overview and stock assessment (2023)

30. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-10 Rev_1](#) which provided an opportunity to consider the results of the 2023 IPHC stock assessment for Pacific halibut within the Convention Area, including a summary of data sources used.
31. The Commission **NOTED** that:
- a) total fishing mortality reduced from 2022 to 2023;
 - b) modelled FISS trends were down 2-4% coastwide, a smaller decline than in the fishery CPUE, which was down 12% and had a strong effect on the stock assessment results;
 - c) the 2023 FISS produced an index with precision similar to recent years, but that reduced sampling in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A and no sampling in 4B resulted in greater uncertainty in the trend and distribution in these areas;
 - d) the NOAA Fisheries trawl survey in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4CDE (and part of 4A) provided a reliable index despite no direct FISS activity, although the Secretariat advises that it remains important to undertake the FISS periodically along the shelf edge in IPHC Regulatory Area 4CDE since that area is not sampled by the trawl survey;
 - e) Biological Region 2 is currently at the highest observed proportion (26%) of the coastwide biomass since 1993 (the full historical range is unknown);
 - f) this year's stock assessment estimated biomass trends are stable from 2022 to 2023;
 - g) as described in the presentation, the estimate of 2023 spawning biomass was 11% lower than in last year's stock assessment;
 - h) the 2012 and 2014 year-classes are now reasonably well-estimated and although these estimates are larger than year-classes from 2006-2011, they are each smaller than the 2005 cohort;
 - i) weight at age, recruitment, and fishing pressure are estimated to be the main drivers of stock abundance and biomass.
32. The Commission **NOTED** that the relative spawning biomass is estimated to be at 42% of the unfished level at the beginning of 2024, above the SB30% threshold, and that the fishing intensity was estimated to be at F52% in 2023, a lower level of fishing than the reference level (F43%).
33. The Commission **NOTED** that because it sets TCEYs, the corresponding fishing intensity comes with a high degree of uncertainty.

6. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION

6.1 IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update

34. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-11](#), that provides an update of the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process and the Harvest Strategy Policy, and to seek guidance on the MSE Program of Work.
35. The Commission **NOTED** that the SRB endorsed the 2023 operating model for use in MSE evaluations of MPs that would lead to the adoption of a harvest strategy, including assessment frequency, fishing intensity, and data monitoring.
36. **NOTING** the current priority objectives, the Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat, working with the MSAB and SRB, explore the development of a new coastwide objective related to absolute spawning biomass or catch-rates, to either replace the current B36% objective or be added as a fifth priority objective. The Secretariat supports developing a new objective for the Commission to decide if it is a useful objective to assist in determining an MP that optimizes yield via optimal catch-rates or opportunity.

37. The Commission **NOTED** that the following decisions are necessary for the adoption of a Harvest Strategy Policy at the 101st Annual Meeting of the IPHC (AM101), or sooner:

- a) that the harvest strategy is related to a management procedure to determine the coastwide TCEY, and that the TCEY distribution is an independent negotiation that is part of the policy;
- b) the evaluation of multi-year management procedures along with fishing intensity incorporating uncertainty in how the TCEY is distributed;
- c) additional management procedure elements to evaluate including constraints on the coastwide TCEY, methods to smooth estimation of stock distribution, and, if desired, procedures to distribute the TCEY to IPHC Regulatory Areas;
- d) the Secretariat to continue to work with the SRB and MSAB to define specific exceptional circumstances using FISS observations, biological observations, and new research;
- e) the Secretariat to continue to work with the SRB and MSAB to prescribe the actions to take when an exceptional circumstance occurs;
- f) edits and additions to the current harvest strategy policy document.

38. The Commission **NOTED** that:

- a) to understand how reductions in the FISS design may affect management outcomes, the evaluation of FISS design scenarios using the MSE framework was recommended by the SRB at SRB023;

[SRB023–Rec.10](#) (para. 29) “*The SRB RECOMMENDED evaluating fishing intensity and frequency of the stock assessment elements of management procedures and FISS uncertainty scenarios using the MSE framework. MP elements related to constraints on the interannual change in the TCEY and calculation of stock distribution may be evaluated for a subset of the priority management procedures as time allows.*”

[SRB023–Rec.22](#) (para. 64) “*NOTING the presentation demonstrating how secondary FISS objectives influence choices for future FISS designs that may have already been endorsed by the SRB based only on primary objectives, the SRB RECOMMENDED that the MSE include some scenarios in which the FISS is skipped (as similarly requested above in [para. 29]) because of occasional (or functional) economic constraints on executing full FISS designs. Such simulation scenarios would provide some indication of the potential scale of impacts on MP performance of maintaining long-term revenue neutrality of the FISS.*”

- b) an interim Harvest Strategy Policy document may be adopted at the 100th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM100) using the current interim management procedure for a coastwide TCEY along with edits and additions to the current harvest strategy policy document.
- c) alternatively, the Commission may decide not to adopt any new Harvest Strategy Policy in the near term due to considerable variability and uncertainty and a desire to retain more flexibility.

7. HARVEST DECISION TABLE 2024

39. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-12 Rev. 1](#) that provided short-term (3 year) stock projections and the harvest decision table for 2024-2026.

40. The Commission **NOTED** that:

- a) the status quo coastwide TCEY corresponds to a 45/100 chance of stock decline over the next 1-3 years;
- b) coastwide TCEYs at or above 39.1 million pounds would have a greater than a 50% chance of stock decline over the next three years;
- c) fishing at the reference level (F43%) would equate to a coastwide TCEY of 48.9 million pounds in 2024 and have a high likelihood of stock decline over one-year (74/100) and three-years (72%).

41. The Commission **NOTED** several additional risks not included in the harvest decision table:

- a) that the stock is at the lowest absolute population level in the last 30+ years due to recent poor recruitment and low weight at age;
- b) low catch-rates in the FISS and directed commercial fisheries;
- c) Biological Region 3 is currently at the lowest observed proportion of the coastwide biomass since 1993 (the full historical range is unknown);
- d) ecosystem/climate uncertainty remains high.

42. The Commission **AGREED** that at this time it did not have:

- a) any additional harvest decision table alternatives for the Secretariat to evaluate in preparation for AM100;
- b) any suggestions for the Secretariat regarding detailed mortality projections for 2024 (by IPHC Regulatory Area and fishery sector) for evaluation in preparation for AM100.

8. FISS DESIGN EVALUATIONS 2024-2028

8.1 2024-28 FISS design evaluation

43. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-13 Rev 1](#) that presented design options for the IPHC's Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) for the 2024-28 period, as requested by the Commission, and an evaluation of those designs based on the Commission's stated objectives for the FISS.

44. The Commission **RECALLED** that the priority of an optimised FISS sampling design is to maintain or enhance data quality (precision and bias) by establishing minimum sampling requirements in terms of station count, station distribution and skates per station. Potential considerations that could add to or modify the design are logistics and cost (secondary design layer), and FISS removals (impact on the stock), data collection assistance for specific Contracting Party agencies, and IPHC policies (tertiary design layer). These priorities are the stated objectives of the Commission, for implementation by the Secretariat and are outlined in [Table 1](#).

45. The Commission **NOTED** that:

- a) the choice of numbers of skates per station is made to help ensure that the Commission's stated secondary objective of long-term revenue neutrality is met, and accounts for differences in cost due to the relationship between number of skates and number of stations that can be fished per day;
- b) a low proportion of FISS stations are ineffective due to whale depredation, and the effect of this loss of data on the variance of estimates is minor;
- c) a $\leq 15\%$ target range for the CV at the IPHC Regulatory Area level of WPUE and NPUE indices was chosen in order to maintain the precision of the estimated indices within historical levels. CVs are lower than 15% within IPHC Regulatory Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 4CDE, but the sampling required to decrease the CV further in other IPHC Regulatory Areas would present considerable logistical challenges.

Table 1. Commission directives - Prioritization of FISS objectives and corresponding design layers.

Priority	Objective	Design Layer
Primary	Sample Pacific halibut for stock assessment and stock distribution estimation.	Minimum sampling requirements in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station distribution; • Station count; • Skates per station.
Secondary	Long-term revenue neutrality.	Logistics and cost: operational feasibility and cost/revenue neutrality.

Tertiary	Minimize removals, and assist others where feasible on a cost-recovery basis.	Removals: minimize impact on the stock while meeting primary priority; Assist: assist others to collect data on a cost-recovery basis; IPHC policies: ad-hoc decisions of the Commission regarding the FISS design.
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46. The Commission **NOTED** that the FISS sampling provides key information for stock assessment and management, including:
- Coastwide and Biological Region specific trends in numbers and biomass;
 - Demographic data, including length, age, sex and individual weights;
 - Distributional estimates by Biological Region and IPHC Regulatory Area.
47. The Commission **NOTED** the importance of broad spatial coverage across Biological Regions, IPHC Regulatory Areas, and key habitats within Regulatory Areas in order to ensure that fishery-independent information from the FISS leads to estimates with minimal bias.
48. The Commission **NOTED** the Secretariat's advice that:
- FISS sampling designs should not be based only on a target CV, but should include consideration of potential bias, where large contiguous areas may not be annually sampled, as well as comprehensive and representative sampling of biological data to ensure that trends are interpreted accurately with regard to year-class strengths and size-at-age.
 - target CVs and sampling in general should include greater precision for the core areas of the stock (e.g. a CV of 5%), in order to prioritize information from areas that have the greatest influence on coastwide trends and could have lower precision (e.g. a CV of 15-20%) at the edges of the range.
49. The Commission **NOTED** the range of options presented by the IPHC Secretariat at the request of the Commission, as detailed in [Table 2](#), and described in paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-13 Rev 1](#).

Table 2. Comparison of design alternative costs for the 2024 FISS; see paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-13 Rev 1](#) for additional details on each design. Each of options 2-8 can be added in any combination by summing the additional costs for each option selected.

Option	Design	IPHC Regulatory Areas sampled (charter regions)	Additional net cost
1	Revenue neutral with efficiencies	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (1)	--
2	Add additional 3A to Option 1	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (2)	(\$47,000)
3	Add 3B to Option 1	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (1), 3B (1)	(\$62,000)
4	Add 4A/4B to Option 1	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (1), 4A+4B (1)	(\$245,000)
5	Add 2A to Option 1	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (1), 2A (1)	(\$134,000)
6	Add additional 2B to Option 1	2B (3), 2C (3), 3A (1)	(\$68,000)
7	Add oceanographic monitoring to Option 1	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (1)	(\$55,000) ¹
8	Add trawl survey staffing to Option 1	2B (2), 2C (3), 3A (1)	(\$120,000)

¹ The estimated expense for adding oceanographic monitoring would scale according to the number of regions included in the design. It is projected that with each additional region, expenses would increase by approximately \$10,000.

50. The Commission **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat provide an intersessional decision paper within one week, that would describe the operational and financial estimates for a FISS charter region in IPHC Regulatory Area 4CDE. The intention is for the Commission to review and provide an intersessional decision on whether to proceed with a charter region in IPHC Regulatory Area 4CDE as part of the 2024 RFT process.

51. The Commission **AGREED** on an optimized design for the 2024 FISS as provided at [Appendix IV](#), that balances the Commission's primary and secondary objectives for the FISS. Specifically, the 2024 design shall include Options 1, 2, and 3 from [Table 2](#). In addition, Option 4 shall be included in the RFT process but is not yet endorsed. Once bids are received and evaluated in February 2024, the Commission will make a final decision on whether to proceed or not with Option 4, based on bids and logistical constraints at that time and potentially a new option for IPHC Regulatory Area 4CDE.
52. The Commission **AGREED** that the base block design (Figs. 2.1 to 2.5 of paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-13 Rev 1](#)) or a block design with similar sampling effort looks promising for implementation as an alternative to FISS designs based on random sampling in the core of the stock.
53. The Commission **NOTED** that stock assessment and MSE simulation analyses will be conducted in 2024 to further explore the effect on annual tactical and strategic decision-making of reduced FISS designs in the future. The Secretariat also requests clarification on whether the Commission has interest in supporting FISS designs that would provide IPHC Regulatory Area CVs comparable to the historical target ($\leq 15\%$) to inform potential management procedures that rely on annual stock distribution estimates.
54. The Commission **AGREED** to consider whether to maintain the oceanographic sampling program to provide a continuous source of data on environmental conditions experienced by Pacific halibut, and whether to staff the NOAA trawl surveys, in January 2024.
55. The Commission **NOTED** the design options presented for 2025-28 that are expected to be modified in subsequent years and will be dependent on the final design implemented for 2024.

Cost and revenue

56. The Commission **RECALLED** that at IM098, the Commission agreed that the Secretariat should continue to target long-term revenue neutrality when designing FISS options, and given the challenges facing the fishery in 2023, a more precautionary design was desirable for 2023.

[IPHC-2022-IM098-R](#) (para. 37) "*The Commission AGREED that the FISS should continue to target long-term revenue neutrality, and given the challenges facing the fishery in 2023, a more precautionary design is desirable for 2023.*"

57. The Commission **NOTED** that the estimated revenue figures for Option 1 in [Table 2](#) should be considered with a +/- of ~\$450,000 given stock abundance and price uncertainty.
58. The Commission **AGREED** that supplementary funding is likely needed to sustain the FISS moving forward and **AGREED** to explore options for funding, e.g. from Contracting Parties or external partners.

2024 FISS bid specifications and tenders

59. The Commission **NOTED** that the IPHC Secretariat will be soliciting tenders for the 2024 FISS in December 2023 (with tenders due on 4 February 2024), and that tender specifications would incorporate standard wording for amendments that the Commission may make at any time prior to the FISS season commencing. The Secretariat will welcome bids from both fixed-gear and snap-gear vessels. The tender process follows standard U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) guidelines, and is available on the IPHC website for transparency and accountability purposes.

9. BIOLOGICAL & ECOSYSTEM SCIENCES – PROJECT UPDATES

9.1 Report on Current and Future Biological and Ecosystem Science Research Activities

60. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-14](#) that provided a description of the biological and ecosystem science research projects conducted and planned by the IPHC Secretariat and contemplated within the Five-year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26).
61. The Commission **NOTED** the primary biological research activities at IPHC that follow Commission objectives are identified and described in the IPHC's 5-Year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26). These activities are summarized in five broad research areas designed to provide inputs into stock assessment (SA) and the management strategy evaluation (MSE) processes, as follows:

- a) **Migration and Population Dynamics.** Studies are aimed at improving current knowledge of Pacific halibut migration and population dynamics throughout all life stages in order to achieve a complete understanding of stock structure and distribution across the entire distribution range of Pacific halibut in the North Pacific Ocean and the biotic and abiotic factors that influence it.
 - b) **Reproduction.** Studies are aimed at providing information on the sex ratio of the commercial catch and to improve current estimates of maturity and fecundity.
 - c) **Growth.** Studies are aimed at describing the role of factors responsible for the observed changes in size-at-age and at evaluating growth and physiological condition in Pacific halibut.
 - d) **Mortality and Survival Assessment.** Studies are aimed at providing updated estimates of discard mortality rates in the guided recreational fisheries and at evaluating methods for reducing mortality of Pacific halibut.
 - e) **Fishing Technology.** Studies are aimed at developing methods that involve modifications of fishing gear with the purpose of reducing Pacific halibut mortality due to depredation and bycatch.
62. The Commission **NOTED** the progress that the IPHC Secretariat has made in the five key research areas contemplated in the IPHC 5-Year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26).
63. The Commission **NOTED** the importance of continuing research in the research area on Growth to better understand environmental, dietary and ecological influences on Pacific halibut growth.
64. The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat add commentary on the importance / likely effects on the stock assessment when presenting of on each of the primary biological research activities.

10. IPHC FISHERY REGULATIONS: PROPOSALS FOR THE 2023-24 PROCESS

65. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-15](#), that provided the Commission with an indication of the IPHC Fishery Regulation proposals, which the IPHC Secretariat, Contracting Parties, and other stakeholders have submitted or indicated they anticipate submitting, for consideration by the Commission in the 2023-24 regulatory process.
66. The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that interested stakeholders note the deadline for submission of IPHC Fishery Regulation proposals, for consideration at the 100th Session of the Annual Meeting (AM100), of **23 December 2023**. Late proposals will not be considered at AM100, but stakeholders may also submit statements up until the day before the AM100. More information is available via the updated IPHC website: <https://iphc.int/the-commission/fishery-regulations/>.
67. The Commission **NOTED** that the IPHC Secretariat and the relevant Contracting Party agencies intend to coordinate a joint review of regulatory proposals, with the aim of identifying and resolving issues and clarifying draft regulatory language in advance of AM00.

10.1 IPHC Secretariat fishery regulation proposals

10.1.1 IPHC Fishery Regulations: Mortality and Fishery Limits (Sect. 5)

68. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-PropA1](#), that provides the Commission with an opportunity to recall the format of the IPHC Fishery Regulations: Mortality and Fishery Limits (Sect. 5), to be populated at AM100.

10.1.2 IPHC Fishery Regulations: Commercial Fishing Periods (Sect. 9)

69. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-PropA2](#), that provides the Commission with an opportunity to recall the format of the IPHC Pacific Halibut Fishery Regulations: Commercial Fishing Periods (Sect. 9), to be filled at AM100.

10.1.3 IPHC Fishery Regulations: Logs (Sect. 19)

70. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-PropA3](#), that proposed amendments to update and align log requirements for Contracting Parties in the IPHC Fishery Regulations.

10.2 Contracting Party fishery regulation proposals

10.2.1 IPHC Fishery Regulations: Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut – IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E (Sect. 29) - Charter Management Measures in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A

71. The Commission **NOTED** an indication of expected paper IPHC-2023-IM099-PropB1, that would propose charter management measures reflective of fishery limits for the recreational fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A. This proposal was deferred until AM100.

10.3 Stakeholder fishery regulation proposals

72. Nil

10.4 Stakeholder statements

73. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-INF01](#) that provided statements on IPHC fishery Regulations or published regulatory proposals from stakeholders.

11. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

11.1 Draft: Financial Statement for FY2023

74. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-16 Rev 1](#), that provided the Commission with the draft Financial Statement for FY2023 (financial period: 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023), noting the accounts are still being finalised and audited for FY2023.
75. The Commission **NOTED** a number of changes were being implemented to bring the IPHC from being OCBOA (Other Comprehensive Basis of Accounting) compliant to GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) compliant, that was completed for FY2023:
- a) Implementation of ASC 842, which is a new accounting standard requiring leases to be reported as right to use assets and liabilities on the Balance Sheet instead of rent and lease expense on the Income Statement. Time value of money is considered in the calculation and amortized over the life of the lease. This creates more expense reported at the beginning of the lease and less expense reported toward the end of the lease. Historically, lease expenses have been equal payment per the lease agreements.
 - b) Period cut off for matching income and expense of grants - Historically, the Commission reported grant funds as revenue when the cash was received in the bank account. For FY2023, grant revenue has been accrued for when the criteria was met, which is when costs covered under the grant agreement are expended.
 - c) Due to the conversion to GAAP financial reporting, cash received during FY2023 is reported as revenue in a prior year (FY2021 and FY2022) instead of FY2023. A reclass entry has been prepared and provided to the audit firm to be made in the audit system and audit report. The amounts will remain in the Commission's books and records as the income had not been accrued in past periods. The timing of the AK Cost Recovery grant from NOAA was a significant factor as the amounts are paid as reimbursements, two fiscal years after eligible costs are incurred, and two (2) periods were awarded in 2023 (for FY2021 and FY2022). Cash amounts expected to be received in FY2024 have been accrued as of FY2023 when the costs were expended.
76. The Commission **NOTED** that the annual audit report for FY2023 will be published to the FAC100 meeting page no later than 23 December 2023.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Preparation for 100th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM100) and associated subsidiary bodies

77. The Commission **RECALLED** that the 100th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM100) will be held in-person from 22-26 January 2024, at the Hotel Captain Cook, in Anchorage Alaska, USA.
78. The Commission **NOTED** that information concerning the meeting, including electronic versions of documents to be considered, will be published on the meeting webpages as they become available, but no later than 30 days prior to the commencement of each meeting, in accordance with Rule 8.4 of the IPHC Rules of Procedure (2023), as follows:
- [100th Session of the IPHC Finance and Administration Committee \(FAC100\)](#): Deadline 23 December 2023;
 - [100th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting \(AM100\)](#): Deadline 23 December 2023;
 - [94th Session of the IPHC Conference Board \(CB094\)](#): Deadline 24 December 2023;
 - [29th Session of the IPHC Processor Advisory Board \(PAB029\)](#): Deadline 24 December 2023.
79. The Commission **NOTED** the request from the IPHC Secretariat for all those who wish to attend the AM100 and associated subsidiary bodies, to register for each meeting as needed.

12.2 Contracting Party National Reports - Template

80. The Commission **NOTED** paper [IPHC-2023-IM099-INF03](#) that provided an opportunity for the Commission to review the proposed template for the National Reports from Contracting Parties (CPs), and to provide guidance on areas for focus at AM100.
81. The Commission **AGREED** that the template should aim to streamline the development of the National Report and enhance consistency across CPs. The proposed content closely aligns with the previous annual submissions from both Canada and USA, but focuses on improved organisation for more straightforward comparison. At the same time, the template maintains flexibility to accommodate information that each CP deems important to share.

13. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 99TH SESSION OF THE IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM099)

82. The report of the 99th Session of the IPHC Interim Meeting ([IPHC-2023-IM099-R](#)) was **ADOPTED** on 01 December 2023, including the consolidated set of recommendations and requests arising from IM099, provided at [Appendix V](#).

APPENDIX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE 99TH SESSION OF THE IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM099)

Commission Officers

Chairperson	Vice-Chairperson
Mr Jon Kurland (United States of America)	Mr Paul Ryall (Canada)

Commissioners

Canada	United States of America
Mr Paul Ryall	Mr Jon Kurland
Mr Neil Davis	Mr Robert Alverson
Mr Peter DeGreef	Mr Richard Yamada

Advisors/experts (Credentialed)

Ms Felicia Cull – Policy Advisor	Mr Kurt Iverson – Technical Advisor
Ms. Danielle Scriven – Technical Advisor	Mr Demian Schane – Legal Advisor
Ms. Gwyn Mason – Technical Advisor	Mr Frank Lockhart – Technical/Policy Advisor
Ms. Ann-Marie Huang – Science Advisor	Mr Patrick Moran – Policy Advisor
Mr Matt Sweeting-Woods - Advisor	Mr Dimitri Varmazis – Financial Advisor
	Dr Peter Hulson – Scientific Advisor

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APPENDIX II**AGENDA FOR THE 99TH SESSION OF THE IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM099)****Date:** 30 November – 1 December 2023**Location:** Electronic**Venue:** Adobe Connect**Time:** 09:00-17:00 (PST) daily**Chairperson:** Mr Jon Kurland (USA)**Vice-Chairperson:** Mr Paul Ryall (Canada)

- 1. OPENING OF THE SESSION** (Chairperson)
- 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION** (Chairperson & Executive Director)
- 3. IPHC PROCESS** (D. Wilson)
 - 3.1 Update on actions arising from the 99th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099), 2023 Special Sessions, and intersessional decisions (D. Wilson)
 - 3.2 Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2023): Draft (D. Wilson & B. Hutniczak)
 - 3.3 2nd IPHC Performance Review (PRIPHC02): Implementation of recommendations (D. Wilson)
 - 3.4 Report of the 18th Session of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB018) (Co-Chairpersons)
 - 3.5 Reports of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB Chairperson)
 - 3.6 Report of the 24th Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB024) (D. Wilson, J. Planas)
 - 3.7 International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-year program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26) (D. Wilson, J. Planas, I. Stewart, A. Hicks, B. Hutniczak, & R. Webster)
- 4. FISHERY MONITORING**
 - 4.1 Fishery-dependent data overview (2023) (B. Hutniczak)
 - 4.2 Fishery-independent data overview (2023)
 - 4.2.1 IPHC Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2023 (K. Ualesi)
- 5. STOCK STATUS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT (2023)**
 - 5.1 Space-time modelling of survey data (R. Webster)
 - 5.2 Stock Assessment: Data overview and stock assessment (2023)
- 6. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION**
 - 6.1 IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update (A. Hicks)
- 7. HARVEST DECISION TABLE 2024**
 - 7.1 Stock projections and harvest decision table 2024-2026 (I. Stewart & A. Hicks)
- 8. FISS DESIGN EVALUATIONS 2024-2028**
 - 8.1 2024-28 FISS design evaluation (R. Webster)
- 9. BIOLOGICAL AND ECOSYSTEM SCIENCES – PROJECT UPDATES**
 - 9.1 Report on Current and Future Biological and Ecosystem Science Research Activities (J. Planas)
- 10. IPHC FISHERY REGULATIONS: PROPOSALS FOR THE 2023-24 PROCESS**
 - 10.1 IPHC Secretariat fishery regulation proposals (B. Hutniczak)
 - 10.2 Contracting Party fishery regulation proposals (Contracting Parties)
 - 10.3 Stakeholder fishery regulation proposals (Stakeholders)
 - 10.4 Stakeholder statements (B. Hutniczak)

11. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

11.1 FY2023 Budget: update (D. Wilson)

12. OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Preparation for the 100th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM100) and associated subsidiary bodies (D. Wilson)

12.2 Contracting Party National Reports – Template (B. Hutniczak)

13. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 99th SESSION OF THE IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM099) (Chairperson & Executive Director)

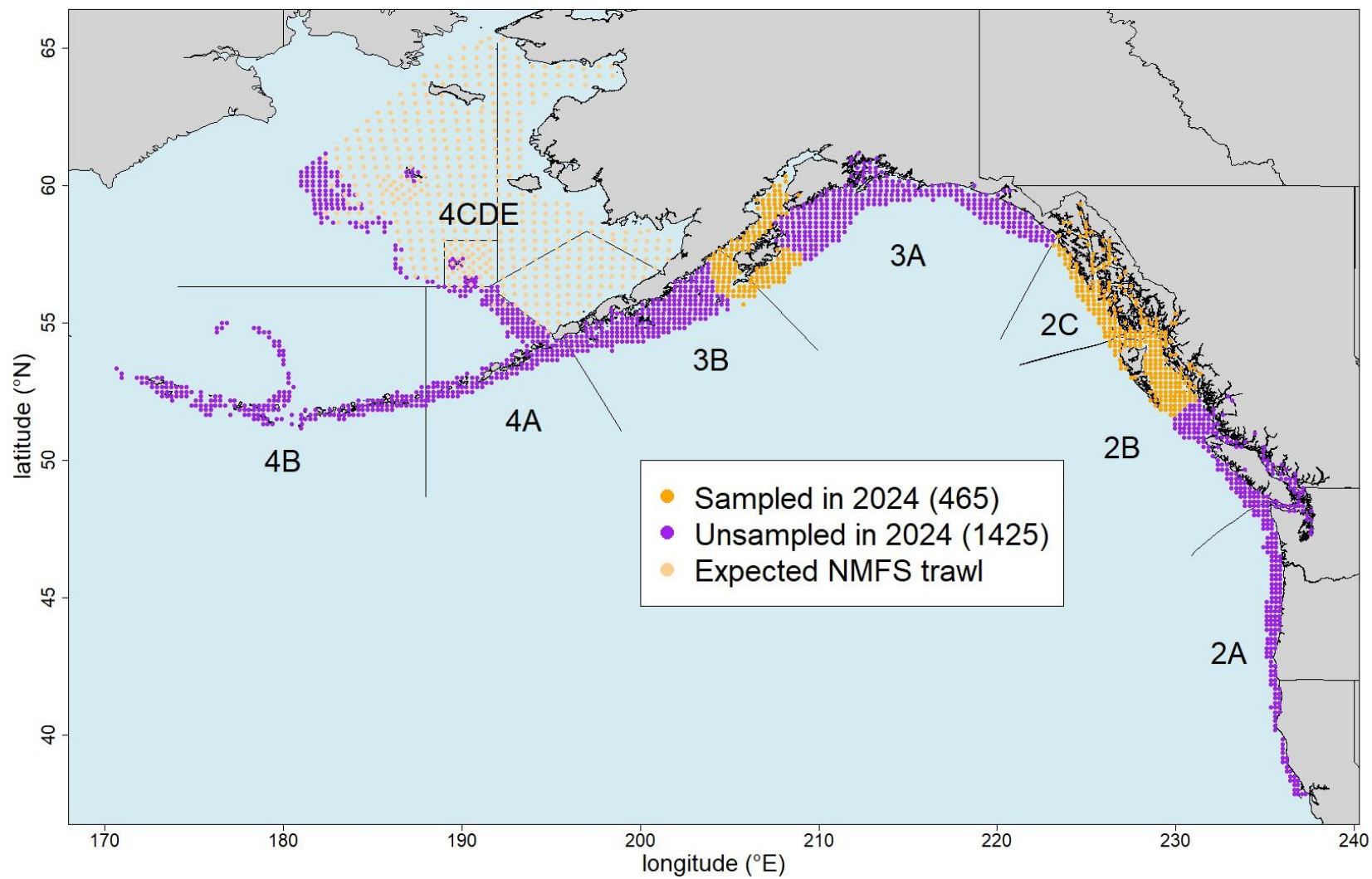
APPENDIX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE 99TH SESSION OF THE IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM099)

Document	Title	Availability
IPHC-2023-IM099-01	Agenda & Schedule for the 99 th Session of the IPHC Interim Meeting (IM099)	✓ 21 Jun 2023 ✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-02	List of Documents for the 99 th Session of the IPHC Interim Meeting (IM099)	✓ 21 Jun 2023 ✓ 27 Oct 2023 ✓ 29 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-03	Update on actions arising from the 99 th Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099), 2023 Special Sessions, and intersessional decisions (D. Wilson)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-04	Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2023): Draft (D. Wilson & B. Hutniczak)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-05	Implementation of the Recommendations from the 2 nd IPHC Performance Review (PRIPHC02) (D. Wilson)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-06	International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-Year program of integrated research and monitoring (2023-26): Updates (D. Wilson, J. Planas, I. Stewart, A. Hicks, B. Hutniczak, & R. Webster)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-07 Rev_2	Fisheries data overview (2023): Preliminary statistics (B. Hutniczak, H. Tran, T. Kong, K. Sawyer van Vleck, & K. Magrane)	✓ 30 Oct 2023 ✓ 10 Nov 2023 ✓ 29 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-08	IPHC Fishery-independent setline survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2023 (K. Ualesi, R. Rillera, T. Jack, & K. Coll)	✓ 30 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-09 Rev_1	Space-time modelling of survey data (R. Webster)	✓ 31 Oct 2023 ✓ 8 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-10 Rev_1	Data overview and stock assessment for Pacific halibut (<i>Hippoglossus stenolepis</i>) at the end of 2023 (I. Stewart, A. Hicks, R. Webster, D. Wilson)	✓ 30 Oct 2023 ✓ 20 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-11	IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation and Harvest Strategy Policy updates (A. Hicks, I. Stewart, & D. Wilson)	✓ 30 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-12 Rev_1	Stock projections and harvest decision table for 2024-2026 (I. Stewart & A. Hicks)	✓ 30 Oct 2023 ✓ 20 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-13 Rev_1	2024, and 2025-28 FISS Design evaluation (R. Webster, I. Stewart, K. Ualesi, & D. Wilson)	✓ 31 Oct 2023 ✓ 17 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-14	Report on Current and Future Biological and Ecosystem Science Research Activities (J. Planas)	✓ 30 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-15	IPHC Fishery Regulations: Proposals for the 2023-24 process (B. Hutniczak)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-16 Rev_1	Financial Statement for FY2023 - Draft (D. Wilson)	✓ 31 Oct 2023 ✓ 28 Nov 2023

<i>IPHC Fishery Regulation proposals for 2024</i>		
<i>IPHC Secretariat Fishery Regulation proposals for 2024</i>		
IPHC-2023-IM099-PropA1	IPHC Fishery Regulations: Mortality and Fishery Limits (Sect. 5)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-PropA2	IPHC Fishery Regulations: Commercial Fishing Periods (Sect. 9)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-PropA3	IPHC Fishery Regulations: Logs (Sect 19)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
<i>Contracting Party Fishery Regulation proposals for 2024</i>		
IPHC-2023-IM099-PropB1	IPHC Fishery Regulations: Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut – IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E (Sect. 29) - Charter Management Measures in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A (USA)	Deferred to AM100
<i>Other Stakeholder Fishery Regulation proposals for 2024</i>		
IPHC-2023-IM099-PropC1	Nil-to-date	-
<i>Reports from IPHC subsidiary bodies</i>		
IPHC-2023-MSAB018-R	Report of the 18 th Session of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB018)	✓ 25 May 2023
IPHC-2023-SRB022-R	Report of the 22 nd Session of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB022)	✓ 22 Jun 2023
IPHC-2023-SRB023-R	Report of the 23 rd Session of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB023)	✓ 26 Sept 2023
IPHC-2023-RAB024-R	Report of the 24 th Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB024)	✓ 28 Nov 2023
<i>Information papers</i>		
IPHC-2023-IM099-INF01	Stakeholder Statements on IPHC Fishery Regulation proposals (B. Hutniczak)	✓ 27 Oct 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-INF02	IPHC data products – progress report (B. Hutniczak)	✓ 28 Nov 2023
IPHC-2023-IM099-INF03	National Report Template (B. Hutniczak)	✓ 28 Nov 2023

APPENDIX IV
AGREED - OPTIMIZED FISS DESIGN FOR 2024
(ref. [para. 51](#))



APPENDIX V

**CONSOLIDATED SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF THE 99TH SESSION OF THE
IPHC INTERIM MEETING (IM099) (30 NOVEMBER – 1 DECEMBER 2023)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Report of the 24th Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB024)

IM099-Rec.01 (para. 13) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat investigate avenues for leveraging external co-funding from granting agencies, industry, and other sources, to undertake research aimed at fishing technological advances that would benefit Pacific halibut fisheries/sectors.

International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-year program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26)

IM099-Rec.02 (para. 15) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat add commentary on the importance / likely effects on the stock assessment of each research area within section “6.1.3 Biology and Ecology.”

IM099-Rec.03 (para. 16) The Commission **AGREED** that leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) has substantial potential to bring efficiencies and other benefits to the IPHC’s research and monitoring activities. Accordingly, the Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat explore potential applications of AI across the broad range of research and monitoring activities outlined in the IPHC’s 5-Year Program of Integrated Research and Monitoring. This exploration should include identification of lessons to be learned and opportunities that AI might present for the IPHC's activities.

IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update

IM099-Rec.04 (para. 36) **NOTING** the current priority objectives, the Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat, working with the MSAB and SRB, explore the development of a new coastwide objective related to absolute spawning biomass or catch-rates, to either replace the current B36% objective or be added as a fifth priority objective. The Secretariat supports developing a new objective for the Commission to decide if it is a useful objective to assist in determining an MP that optimizes yield via optimal catch-rates or opportunity.

Report on Current and Future Biological and Ecosystem Science Research Activities

IM099-Rec.05 (para. 64) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat add commentary on the importance / likely effects on the stock assessment when presenting of on each of the primary biological research activities.

IPHC Fishery regulations: Proposals for the 2023-24 process

IM099-Rec.06 (para. 66) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that interested stakeholders note the deadline for submission of IPHC Fishery Regulation proposals, for consideration at the 100th Session of the Annual Meeting (AM100), of **23 December 2023**. Late proposals will not be considered at AM100, but stakeholders may also submit statements up until the day before the AM100. More information is available via the updated IPHC website: <https://iphc.int/the-commission/fishery-regulations/>.

*REQUESTS**Fishery-dependent data overview (2023)*

IM099-Req.01 ([para. 19](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that moving forward, the presentation associated with the fishery-dependent data overview paper, include a comparison of the current year values for each sector with those from the previous year.

IPHC Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2023

IM099-Req.02 ([para. 23](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that, moving forward, a map similar to Fig.2, but of stations that were realized during the sampling season be presented and included in the meeting report, with ineffective stations being identified separately from those sampled (via a third colour or icon).

2024-28 FISS design evaluation

IM099-Req.03 ([para. 50](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat provide an intersessional decision paper within one week, that would describe the operational and financial estimates for a FISS charter region in IPHC Regulatory Area 4CDE. The intention is for the Commission to review and provide an intersessional decision on whether to proceed with a charter region in IPHC Regulatory Area 4CDE as part of the 2024 RFT process.