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## IPHC Fishery Regulations:

### Logs (Sect 19) – Update and alignment of log requirements

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#### PURPOSE

To update and align logs requirements for Contracting Parties in the IPHC Fishery Regulations.

#### BACKGROUND

IPHC Fishery Regulations stipulate that operators of Canadian and U.S.A.<sup>1</sup> vessels fishing for Pacific halibut must maintain an accurate log of Pacific halibut fishing operations. These operations are recorded in one of the approved logbooks and collected to support the Commission's objectives.

Detailed log requirements for date, location, amount of gear used, and amount of Pacific halibut taken daily appeared in the Pacific halibut regulations<sup>2</sup> as early as 1934, and later as a part of the section on *Statistical Return by Vessels* (since 1938) or *Licensing of Vessels* (since 1974). A detailed section on logs was introduced to the IPHC Fishery Regulations for the first time in 1984.

#### DISCUSSION

This proposal combines six components for Commission's consideration. Components can be adopted individually, offering the flexibility to adopt either the entire set or select specific elements as needed.

#### Component 1: Submission of missing logs

Differentiation in log requirements between Contracting Parties was introduced in 1998, when the log requirements were imposed on all Canadian vessels engaging in Pacific halibut fishing, regardless of the vessel size. The requirement for U.S.A. vessels remains applicable to vessels that have an overall length of 26 feet (7.9 meters) or greater. At the same time, an additional requirement was imposed on Canadian vessels that read as follows:

*“The log referred to in paragraph (4) [applicable to Canadian vessels fishing for Pacific halibut] shall be [...] (f) mailed to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (yellow copy) and IPHC (white copy) within seven days of offloading.”* (Section 16, par. 5)

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<sup>1</sup> Applicable to U.S.A. vessels that have an overall length of 26 feet (7.9 meters) or greater. See IPHC Fishery Regulations 2023, Sect. 19(1).

<sup>2</sup> At the time, titled International Fisheries Commission Pacific Halibut Fishery Regulations.

A version of this requirement with minor wording modification<sup>3</sup> remains in the current (2023) regulations at Section 19, par. 7:

*“The log referred to in paragraph (5) [applicable to Canadian vessels fishing for Pacific halibut] shall be [...] (f) submitted to the Commission within seven days of the final offload if not previously collected by a Commission employee.”* (Section 19, par. 7)

In contrast to the requirements for Canadian vessels, under the current regulations, the submission of missing logbook data is not required from U.S.A. vessel operators, unless it is specifically requested by the Commission. Currently, logs are collected by authorized representatives of the IPHC at the time of landing. If there is no Commission representative present at the offload site, and the logs were not collected or voluntarily submitted by the operators by the end of the season, the Commission issues “missing log letters” to vessel operators to collect the missing data.<sup>4</sup> The letters request missing information under the authority of Section 19, par. 3(d), which stipulates that logs shall be “open to inspection by any authorized officer or any authorized representative of the Commission upon demand.”

The proposed change to regulations will clarify that logs not previously collected by the Commission must be submitted to the Commission within a specific number of days following the end of the season. The intention of this added clarity and specificity is to prevent data gaps in the information used for various IPHC products, for example, the Pacific halibut stock assessment.

Should the proposed change be adopted, the IPHC will develop an information webpage that will clarify how information recorded in each eligible logbook (see Section 19, par. 1) shall be transmitted to the Commission if it is not collected by an authorized representative of the Commission upon offload. The proposed change will also address situations where logbook data is already transmitted to the Commission in an alternative way, for example, per formal agreement with an agency that is collecting information reported in a non-IPHC issued eligible logbook (see, for example, a recently signed [Data Sharing Agreement with NOAA West Coast Region](#)).

## **Component 2: Consistent reporting requirements**

The IPHC Secretariat proposes consistent requirements with respect to reporting fishing location (using latitude and longitude coordinates) and daily activity (reporting by set instead of by day). The proposed changes to Section 19, par. 2(c) and 2(e) will ensure consistency of the submitted data, rendering it more usable for IPHC products. Alternative reporting permitted by the existing regulations relies on an outdated approach and does not align with the fields in the logbook forms approved by the IPHC and listed in Section 19, par. 1.

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<sup>3</sup> Since 2000, IPHC was requiring the yellow copy of the logbook instead of the white copy. In 2001, a clarification was added that yellow copy was to be sent to the Commission only “*if not collected by an International Pacific Halibut Commission employee*” (Section 16, par. 7(g)). In 2017, the wording “*mailed*” was replaced with a more flexible “*submitted*” provision (Section 16, par. 7(g)).

<sup>4</sup> Outstanding logs may be collected by the representative of the Commission during the proceeding offload. Number of logs are also sent to the Commission throughout the year, although this is not formally required by the IPHC Fishery Regulations. It is a common practice to send missing logs ahead of the Secretariat’s prompt at the end of the fishing season.

### **Component 3: List of eligible logbooks**

The IPHC Secretariat reviewed the list of eligible logbooks for U.S.A. vessels fishing for Pacific halibut (see Section 19, par. 1 and [Appendix B](#)) and confirmed that the Alaska hook-and-line logbook provided by Petersburg Vessel Owners Association is out of print.<sup>5</sup> The proposed change includes removal of a legacy provision that is no longer in use. The revised regulatory language also uses the updated name of the logbook provided by IPHC (IPHC Pacific halibut logbook), updated name of the NOAA Daily Fishing Logbook (aligning it with the name provided on [NOAA Fisheries website](#) and in line with [50 CFR 679.5\(c\)\(3\)\(i\)\(B\)](#)), adds equivalent applicable to catcher/processors (Catcher/Processor Longline and Pot Gear Daily Cumulative Production Logbook), reorders the list, moves the most applicable logbooks to the top, and splits Area 2A-specific provisions for consistent use of lists in paragraphs for easier referencing.

### **Component 4: Writing in the logs**

The IPHC Secretariat proposes adding a paragraph to Section 19 that highlights the importance of writing that is clear and legible for data entry. While electronic monitoring is becoming more prevalent, it is important to note that vessel operators who opt for traditional paper logbooks are responsible for providing information that can be efficiently transferred to the IPHC database for use in IPHC products.

### **Component 5: Electronic logbooks approved by NOAA Fisheries**

NOAA Fisheries have a third-party vendor beta testing an electronic logbook in Alaska serving as a replacement for Catcher Vessel Longline and Pot Gear Daily Fishing Logbook (DFL). This logbook may be approved for full use for the 2024 fishing season. One of the requirements for approval is the integration with eLandings. The suggested language will provide clarity that equivalent of approved logbook (in this case, DFL) in electronic format approved by NOAA Fisheries, but not necessarily provided by NOAA Fisheries, is eligible for reporting Pacific halibut. This component is conditional on cooperation between the IPHC and the vendor (Deckhand electronic logbook) on the integration of the tested system into the IPHC process, in particular with respect to convenient access to data by the Commission representatives present at the offload site. Discussions are ongoing and feasibility update will be provided to the Commission before the Annual Meeting.

### **Component 6: Electronic logbooks approved by IPHC**

The IPHC is discussing with the same vendor (Component 5) introducing the electronic equivalent of IPHC Pacific halibut logbook. Should the discussion be successful and the data-sharing process vetted, the suggested regulatory language would offer the flexibility of approving electronic logbook for users of the IPHC paper-based logbooks. Approval of any electronic equivalent of IPHC logbook will be conditional on the vendor accommodating IPHC data verification process, including convenient access to data by the Commission representatives present at the offload site and post-season data upload option.

**Benefits/Drawbacks:** The benefit of the suggested regulatory change (Component 1) is a clear indication that data not collected by the IPHC at the time of landing must still be submitted to the Commission. A clear process is expected to reduce the need for missing logs letters over time. Furthermore, this regulatory proposal would lead to more standardization in IPHC data reporting (Component 2), remove legacy provisions (Component 3), and make explicit that data provided

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<sup>5</sup> Confirmed by Megan O'Neil, Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association Executive Director.

in logbooks must be usable (Component 4). Lastly, adding flexibility to allow the use of the electronic logbooks approved by NOAA Fisheries (Component 5) or IPHC (Component 6) will prevent the need for duplicative effort when reporting Pacific halibut for operators who intend to utilize third-party vendor electronic logbooks. Potential drawbacks include any burden imposed on vessel operators who are accustomed to reporting their Pacific halibut operations by day or using direction and distance from a point of land for location, although this has been identified as minimal (Component 2).

**Sectors Affected:** This proposal directly affects mainly commercial Pacific halibut fishery in all U.S.A. IPHC Regulatory Areas (only component 4 would be applicable to all vessels). However, all sectors and regions stand to benefit from better informed IPHC products, for example, the Pacific halibut stock assessment.

[Appendix A](#) provides details on the suggested regulatory language.

[Appendix B](#) provides details on logbooks approved by the IPHC for U.S.A. vessels.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** draft of the regulatory proposal IPHC-2024-AM100-PropA3 Rev\_2, which updates and aligns log requirements for Contracting Parties in the IPHC Fishery Regulations.

#### **APPENDICES**

[Appendix A](#): Suggested regulatory language.

[Appendix B](#): Logbooks approved by the IPHC for U.S.A. vessels.

## APPENDIX A

## SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

## 19. Logs

- (1) The operator of any U.S. vessel fishing for Pacific halibut that has an overall length of 26 feet (7.9 meters) or greater shall maintain an accurate log of Pacific halibut fishing operations.
- (2) The operator of a vessel fishing in waters in and off Alaska must use one of the following logbooks: **[Component 3]**
- IPHC Pacific halibut logbook (or logbook previously provided by IPHC) or IPHC-approved electronic equivalent **[Component 6]**;
  - ~~the Groundfish/Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Catcher Vessel~~ Longline and Pot Gear Daily Fishing Logbook or ~~Catcher/Processor Longline and Pot Gear Daily Cumulative Production Logbook~~, in electronic or paper form, provided or approved by NOAA Fisheries **[Component 5]**;
  - ~~the Alaska hook-and-line logbook provided by Petersburg Vessel Owners Association or~~ Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association; or
  - ~~the~~ Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) longline-pot logbook.
- (3) The operator of a vessel fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A must use either: **[Component 3]**
- IPHC Pacific halibut logbook (or logbook previously provided by IPHC) or IPHC-approved electronic equivalent **[Component 6]**;
  - ~~the~~ Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Fixed Gear Logbook; or
  - Pacific Coast Groundfish non-trawl logbook provided by NOAA Fisheries.
- (24) The logbooks referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) must include the following information:
- the name of the vessel and the State (ADFG, WDFW, ODFW, or CDFW) or Tribal ID number;
  - the date(s) upon which the fishing gear is set or retrieved;
  - the latitude and longitude coordinates **[Component 2]** or a direction and distance from a point of land for each set or day;
  - the number of skates deployed or retrieved, and number of skates lost; and
  - the total weight or number of Pacific halibut retained for each set **[Component 2]** or day.
- (35) The logbooks referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) shall be:
- maintained on board the vessel;
  - updated not later than 24 hours after 0000 (midnight) local time for each day fished and prior to the offloading or sale of Pacific halibut taken during that fishing trip;
  - retained for a period of two years by the owner or operator of the vessel;
  - open to inspection by an authorized officer or any authorized representative of the Commission upon demand; and
  - kept on board the vessel when engaged in Pacific halibut fishing, during transits to port of landing, and until the offloading of all Pacific halibut is completed; **[Component 1]** and
  - submitted to the Commission within 30 days of the season closing date if not previously collected by an authorized representative of the Commission or otherwise made available to the Commission.
- [...]
- (11) **[Component 4]** Writing in a log referred to in this Section shall be clear and legible.

## APPENDIX B

## LOGBOOKS APPROVED BY THE IPHC FOR U.S.A. VESSELS

No	Logbook	Approved since	Notes
1.	IPHC Pacific halibut logbook (or logbook previously provided by IPHC) <sup>(1)</sup>	1998	
2.	Groundfish/Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Longline and Pot Gear Daily Fishing Logbook provided by NOAA Fisheries ( <a href="#">DFL logbook</a> ) <sup>(2)</sup>	1998	Accepted for reporting in 1997 <sup>(3)</sup> Electronic format allowed since 2016
3.	Alaska hook-and-line logbook provided by Petersburg Vessel Owners Association	1998	Out of print (confirmed by PVOA)
4.	Alaska hook-and-line logbook provided by Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association	1998	
5.	Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) longline-pot logbook	2001	
6.	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Fixed Gear Logbook	2012	
7.	Pacific Coast Groundfish non-trawl logbook provided by NOAA Fisheries	2023	
8.	WDFW Voluntary Sablefish Logbook	2008	Discontinued in 2023

<sup>(1)</sup> Printed with various headings since 1998; *IPHC Pacific halibut logbook* heading since 2019.

<sup>(2)</sup> Initially written into the regulations as "groundfish daily fishing logbook provided by NMFS."

<sup>(3)</sup> Until 1996, the regulations required accurate log of all Pacific halibut fishing operations, but did not specify the format. In 1997, regulations stipulated that "log can be recorded in the groundfish daily fishing logbooks provided by NMFS," but specific logbooks became a requirement only in 1998.