



IPHC Fisheries Dependent Data Collection Design and Implementation in 2024 – Port operations

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PURPOSE

To provide the Commission with the design and implementation of the IPHC fishery-dependent data collection activities in 2024 – Port Operations.

BACKGROUND

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) undertakes fishery-dependent data collection activities coastwide to collect Pacific halibut biological data and catch per unit effort data in the form of vessel logbooks. The IPHC fishery-dependent data collection is the IPHC's primary data source providing extensive information on both spatial and temporal variation of commercial landings for Pacific halibut on an annual basis. With sampled ports receiving landings from across the spatial range of the fishery throughout the commercial fishing period, the IPHC is able to obtain representative data that allow us to characterize spatio-temporal patterns in Pacific halibut size, age, sex and genetic information. The commercial fishery data are also an essential input into the estimation of contemporary length-weight relationships which are widely used to estimate the weight of removals outside of the IPHC (e.g. recreational and non-target removals).

Historical logbooks have been provided to the IPHC dating back to 1888. Biological data collection from the commercial sector began in 1933 and continues to the present day. The sampling design and implementation of these data collections has changed in line with the changing fishery regulations, fleet behaviour and best scientific practices.

The Canadian and U.S.A. governments implemented an Individual Vessel Quota (IVQ) in Canada, and an Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program in Alaska, in 1991 and 1995, respectively. As a result of this change, the Pacific halibut fishery along the Canadian and USA Alaskan coasts went from a 'derby style race for fish' open from 1-22 days to a nearly year-round fishery lasting 245 days with a winter closure. The length of the fishing period has extended further to present day and in 2024 is 267 days. Prior to the implementation of IVQ/IFQ, the fishery-dependent data collection was accomplished by one or more Secretariat stationed in landing ports for up to a week. After implementation, it became necessary to station Secretariat in major ports throughout the fishery's extended duration (8-9 months) to meet the spatio-temporal data objectives.

In addition to collecting data directly, the IPHC coordinates with other entities for standardised collection of fishery-dependent data. This includes provided training and materials for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Tribal Commercial fishery stakeholders, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

FISHERIES DEPENDENT DATA COLLECTION DESIGN

The primary goal and objective of the IPHC port operations is to collect representative samples from Pacific halibut offloads from across the geographical range of the commercial fishery and throughout the commercial fishing period:

- To provide biological input data for the annual IPHC stock assessment;
- To ensure accurate estimation of quantities such as mean commercial weights, size at age, and length-weight relationships used for understanding stock dynamics and estimating non-commercial removals of Pacific halibut;



- To provide data in support of the IPHC research goals, including the collection of biological samples for genetics;
- To maintain field-based points of contact between the fishing industry and the IPHC Headquarters Secretariat.

These goals are achieved through staffing major ports for Pacific halibut landings throughout the commercial fishing period and collaborating with other entities as mentioned above.

Methods for Pacific halibut data collection

The IPHC Secretariat collects data from commercial Pacific halibut landings in major ports. Individual fish are randomly sampled from each landing using prescribed sampling rates for each port and IPHC Regulatory Area, with the goal of sampling a constant proportion of the landed catch over the entire fishing period within each IPHC Regulatory Area. Sampling Pacific halibut consists of the collection of fish lengths, weights, otoliths, and fin clips as well as Pacific halibut logbook data. Biological sampling targets are established by IPHC Regulatory Area to ensure sample sizes are sufficient for the needs of the stock assessment modelers. Prior to the start of each fishing period, landing patterns from each port (for the previous fishing period) are reviewed to ensure proportional sampling (by weight landed) by IPHC Regulatory Area and to ensure minimum data goals are met.

Canada 2024: The IPHC staffed two (2) ports in Canada (Port Hardy and Prince Rupert, BC) with Fisheries Data Specialists (Field, FDS(F)) (Fig. 1).

USA 2024: The IPHC staffed eight (8) ports in Alaska, (Dutch Harbor, St. Paul, Kodiak, Homer, Seward, Juneau, Sitka, Petersburg) with Fisheries Data Specialists (Field, FDS(F)) (Fig. 1). In addition Pacific halibut landings in Bellingham, WA and Newport, OR were sampled by headquarters-based Secretariat. In 2024 assistance was also provided by IPHC Secretariat for sampling IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Tribal commercial landings in Neah Bay, Washington. Training was conducted for 2A Tribal commercial fishery stakeholders, and nine (9) Washington Treaty Tribes were represented at training.

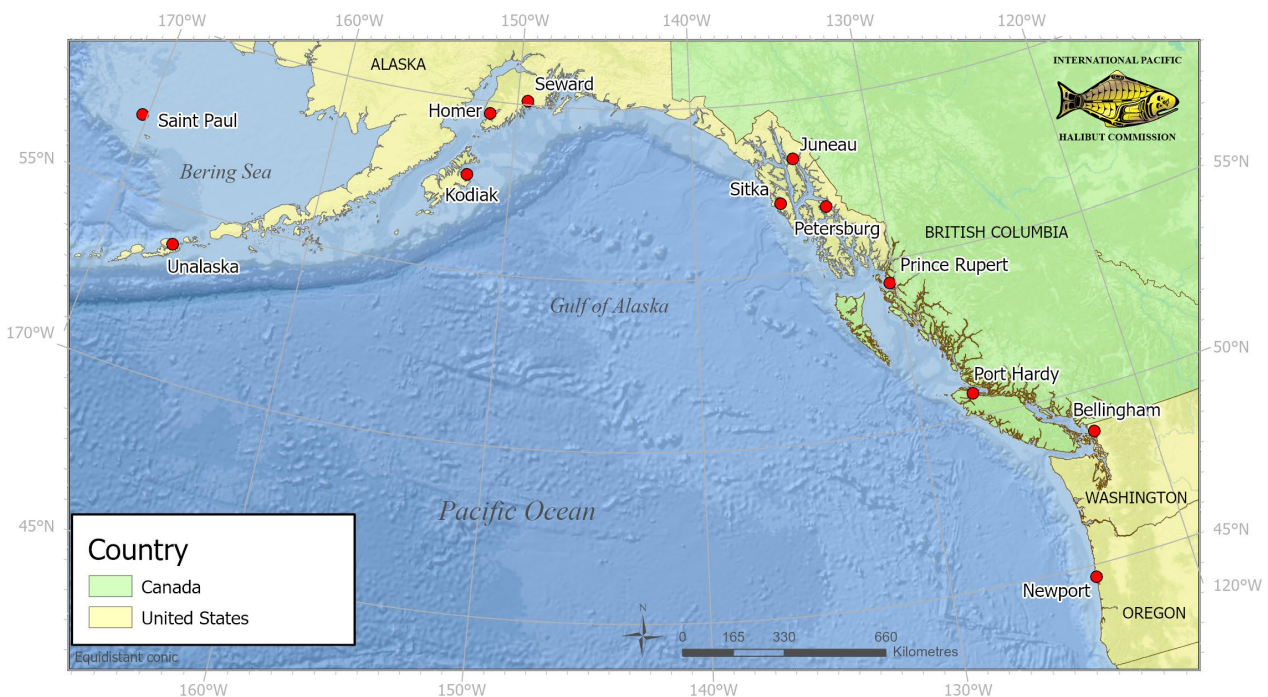


Figure 1. IPHC Fishery-Dependent Data Collection Ports 2024.



Sampling protocols

The IPHC Secretariat collect data according to protocols established in the 2024 International Pacific Halibut Commission Manual for Sampling Directed Commercial Landings ([IPHC-2024-PSM01](#)).

RESULTS

The 2024 fishery dependent data collection is still underway at the time of writing. Logbook and biological data for the current Pacific halibut fishing period will be used in 2024 the Pacific halibut stock assessment provided the data are received, verified, and entered prior to 30 October of this year. Data received and processed after 30 October will be used in the following year's stock assessment.

Commercial biological and catch data interactives including 2024 fishery limits reports which are updated bi-monthly can be found at this link <https://www.iphc.int/data/>.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2024-IM100-07 that provides the Commission with a preliminary summary of the IPHC fishery-dependent data collection design and implementation in 2024.

APPENDICES

Nil.