

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC



HALIBUT COMMISSION

Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2024)

Agenda item: 3.2
IPHC-2025-AM101-04 Rev_1
(D. Wilson & B. Hutniczak)



Purpose

To provide the Commission with a report on the IPHC Secretariat activities in 2024 not already contained within other papers before the Commission.



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HALIBUT COMMISSION

IPHC-2025-AM101-04

Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2024)

PREPARED BY: IPHC SECRETARIAT (D. WILSON & B. HUTNICZAK, 12 DECEMBER 2024)

1 PURPOSE

To provide the Commission with a report on the IPHC Secretariat activities in 2024 not already contained within other papers before the Commission.

2 IPHC SECRETARIAT 2024

The IPHC is a public international organization so designated via Presidential Executive Order 11059 and established by a Convention between Canada and the United States of America. The IPHC Convention was signed on 2 March 1923, ratified on 21 July 1924, and came into effect on **21 October 1924** upon exchange.

The basic texts of the Commission are available on [the IPHC website](#), and prescribe the mission of the organization as:

“..... to develop the stocks of [Pacific] halibut in the Convention waters to those levels which will permit the optimum yield from the fishery and to maintain the stocks at those levels.” IPHC Convention, Article I, sub-article I, para. 2).



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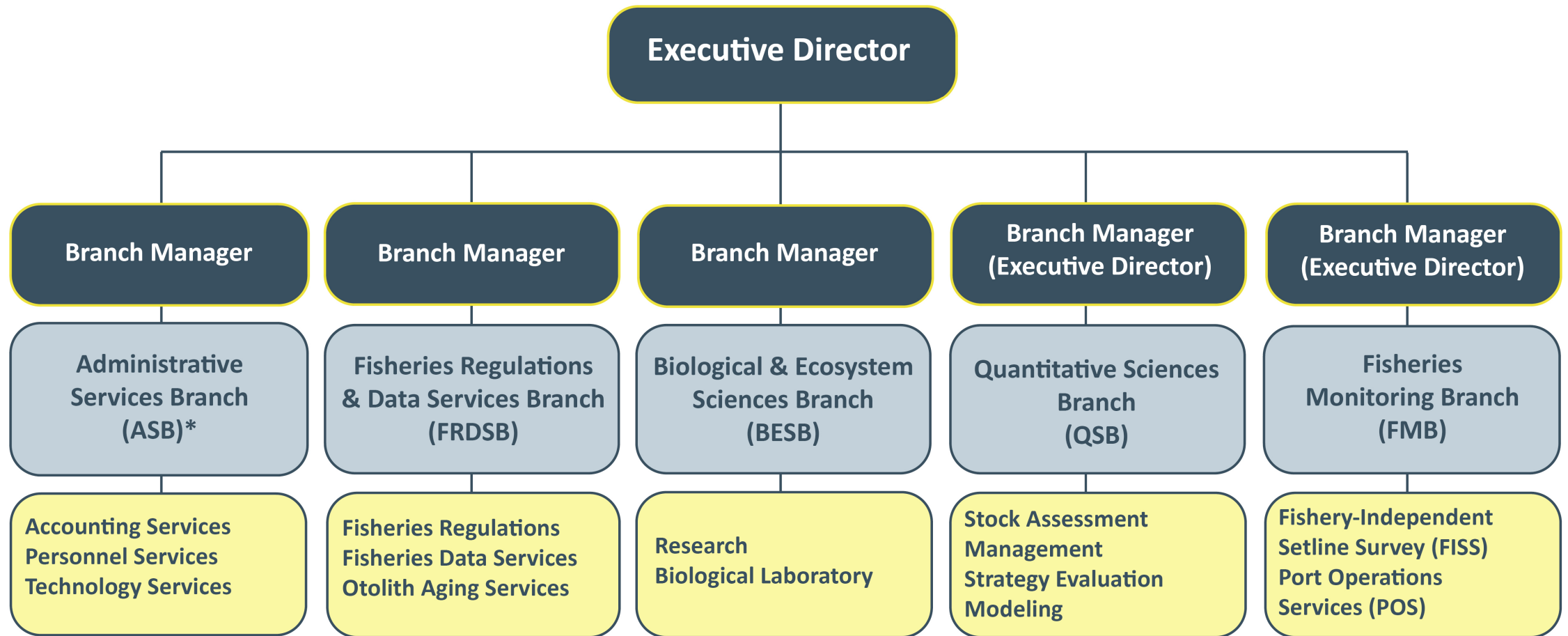
Secretariat

The IPHC Secretariat, formed in support the Commission's activities, is based in Seattle, WA, U.S.A. and consists of 29 fulltime positions (FTEs) and a variable number temporary/contract positions to staff our ports and research vessels ([Appendix I](#)).

As our shared vision, ***the IPHC Secretariat aims to deliver positive economic, environmental, and social outcomes for the Pacific halibut resource for Canada and the U.S.A. through the application of rigorous science, innovation, and the implementation of international best practice.***



Secretariat organization chart



**The ASB provides administrative support functions to all Branches of the Secretariat.*



IPHC Internship program: 2024

The IPHC funds full-time internships each summer.

In 2024 the IPHC hosted two (2) undergraduate interns, Ms Rebecca Barsky and Mr Max Luthy, recent graduates of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and the University of California at Berkeley, respectively.

The two interns have actively participated in IPHC's efforts to genotype the sex of commercial landings and to develop an automatized method for aging of otoliths using artificial intelligence, among other activities.

The internship period ran from 20 May through 23 August 2024.



Rebecca Barsky
(University of Michigan)
2024



Max Luthy
(University of California, Berkely)
2024



IPHC Merit Scholarship for 2024-27

The IPHC funds several Merit Scholarships to support university, technical college, and other post-secondary education for students from Canada and the United States of America who are connected to the Pacific halibut fishery.

Generally, a single new scholarship valued at US\$4,000 per year is awarded every two years.

The scholarships are renewable annually for the normal four-year period of undergraduate education, subject to maintenance of satisfactory academic performance.

Since the scholarships inception in 2002, the IPHC has awarded over **US\$160,000** in scholarship funds to **20 recipients**.



IPHC Merit Scholarship for 2024-27

In 2024, the IPHC Merit Scholarship Selection Panel reviewed applications and selected an outstanding candidate from a very strong application pool, based on academic qualifications, career goals, and relationship to the Pacific halibut industry.

The Selection Panel consists of the following four (4) panelists:

- Robert Alverson (USA Commissioner)
- Peter DeGreef (Canadian Commissioner)
- Angel Drobnica (Industry representative)
- Christa Rusel (Industry representative)

The Selection Panel unanimously awarded **Mr Shea Davis** (Cordova, AK, USA) the 2024 IPHC Merit Scholarship.

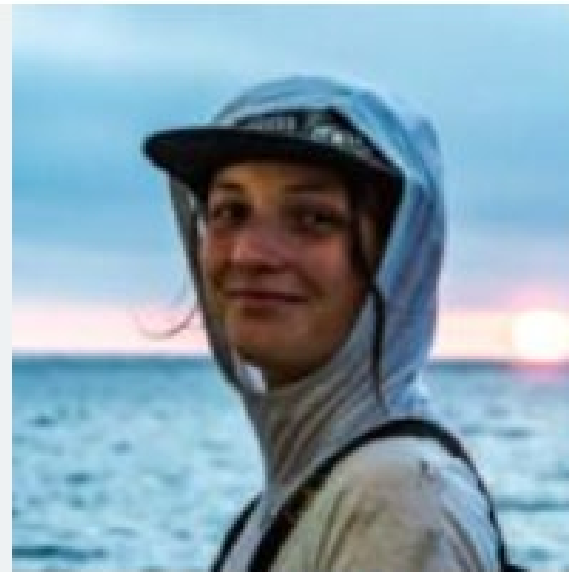


IPHC Merit Scholarship for 2024-27

Name	2024	2025	2026	2027
Lucy Hankins (Seward, AK, USA)	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	.
Shea Davis (Cordova, AK, USA)	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000



Shea Davis
2024



Lucy Hankins
2022



Meetings of the Commission and its Subsidiary bodies during 2024

Meeting	No.	Date	Location	Secretariat material
<u>Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)</u>	100 th	22 Jan	Anchorage, AK, USA	7 working papers
<u>Annual Meeting (AM)</u>	100 th	22-26 Jan	Anchorage, AK, USA	14 working papers, 7 regulatory proposals
<u>Conference Board (CB)</u>	94 th	23-24 Jan	Anchorage, AK, USA	Commission papers
<u>Processor Advisory Board (PAB)</u>	29 th	23-24 Jan	Anchorage, AK, USA	Commission papers
<u>Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB)</u>	19 th	1-3 May	Electronic	5 working papers
<u>Scientific Review Board (SRB)</u>	24 th	18-20 June	Seattle, USA & Electronic	7 working papers
<u>Work Meeting (WM)</u>	2024	5-6 Sept	Bellingham, USA	14 working papers
<u>Scientific Review Board (SRB)</u>	25 th	24-26 Sept	Seattle, USA & Electronic	8 working papers
<u>Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB)</u>	20 th	29-30 Oct	Electronic	5 working papers
<u>Research Advisory Board (RAB)</u>	25 th	19-20 Nov	Seattle, USA & Electronic	5 working papers
<u>Interim Meeting (IM)</u>	100 th	25-26 Nov	Electronic	15 working papers 3 regulatory proposals



IPHC Fishery Regulations

Reference	Title	Decision
IPHC-2024-AM100-PropA1	Mortality and Fishery Limits (Sect. 5)	Adopted at AM100
IPHC-2024-AM100-PropA2	Commercial Fishing Periods (Sect. 9)	Adopted at AM100
IPHC-2024-AM100-PropA3 Rev 2	Logs (Sect 19) – Update and alignment of log requirements	Adopted at AM100
IPHC-2024-AM100-PropB1 Rev 1	Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E (Sect. 28) - Charter management measures in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A	Adopted at AM100
IPHC-2024-AM0100-PropB2	Mortality and Fishery Limits (Sect. 5), and In-Season Actions (Sect. 6) - In-season reallocation of recreational limits in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A	Adopted at AM100



Interactions with Contracting Parties

Canada (selection)

Halibut Advisory Board

The Executive Director of the IPHC (or alternate: Dr Basia Hutniczak) participates as a Halibut Advisory Board (HAB) member.

Trawl electronic monitoring

Pacific halibut electronic length sampling protocol was developed in collaboration with industry, Archipelago Marine Research, after discussions with IPHC. Pilot began in September 2023 and fleetwide implementation commenced on 15 May 2024.



Interactions with Contracting Parties

United States of America (selection)

Electronic logbooks in Alaska

Since 2024, the IPHC has been piloting electronic equivalents of its logbooks in Alaska. The tablets equipped with logbook software are part of a fully operational system that facilitates direct tablet-to-tablet data transmission, eliminating the need for paper records. Data collected via the tablets are verified by IPHC Fisheries Data Specialists in ports using custom log verification software. This software is fully compatible with the existing Daily Fishing Logbook (DFL), enabling seamless electronic verification of both IPHC and DFL data.

Abundance-Based Management of Pacific halibut in the Bering Sea

The final rule establishing abundance-based management of Amendment 80 (A80) trawl sector prohibited species catch (PSC) limit for Pacific halibut (Amendment 123, [88 FR 82740](#)) became effective on 1 January 2024.

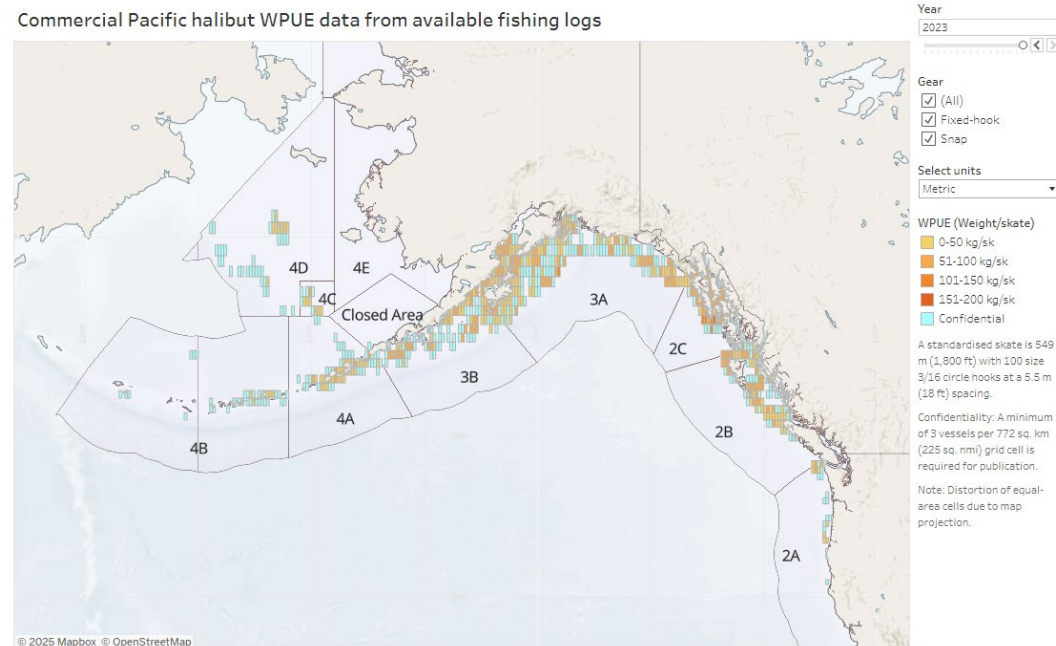
The IPHC Secretariat monitors Pacific halibut-related actions at the Pacific Fishery Management Council and North Pacific Fishery Management Council.



IPHC Publications and outreach

The IPHC Secretariat continues to develop new ways to display data and statistics for our stakeholders and other interested parties, focusing particularly on the addition of timely and useful visual displays such as those listed below.

In 2023, the IPHC Secretariat migrated our website to a new platform with added and simplified updating and design features, and this was expanded in 2024.



IPHC Publications and outreach

Directed commercial fisheries:

- <https://www.iphc.int/datatest/commercial-fisheries>

Fishery-independent setline survey (FISS):

- <https://www.iphc.int/data/datatest/fishery-independent-setline-survey-fiss>

Non-Directed Commercial Discard Mortality Fisheries:

- <https://www.iphc.int/data/datatest/non-directed-commercial-discard-mortality-fisheries>

Geospatial Data:

- <https://www.iphc.int/datatest/data/geospatial-data>

Recreational Fisheries:

- <https://www.iphc.int/fisheries/recreational-fisheries/>

Time Series Data Sets:

- <https://www.iphc.int/data/time-series-datasets>

Subsistence Fisheries:

- <https://www.iphc.int/fisheries/subsistence-fisheries/>

Water Column Profiler Data:

- <https://www.iphc.int/datatest/data/water-column-profiler-data>

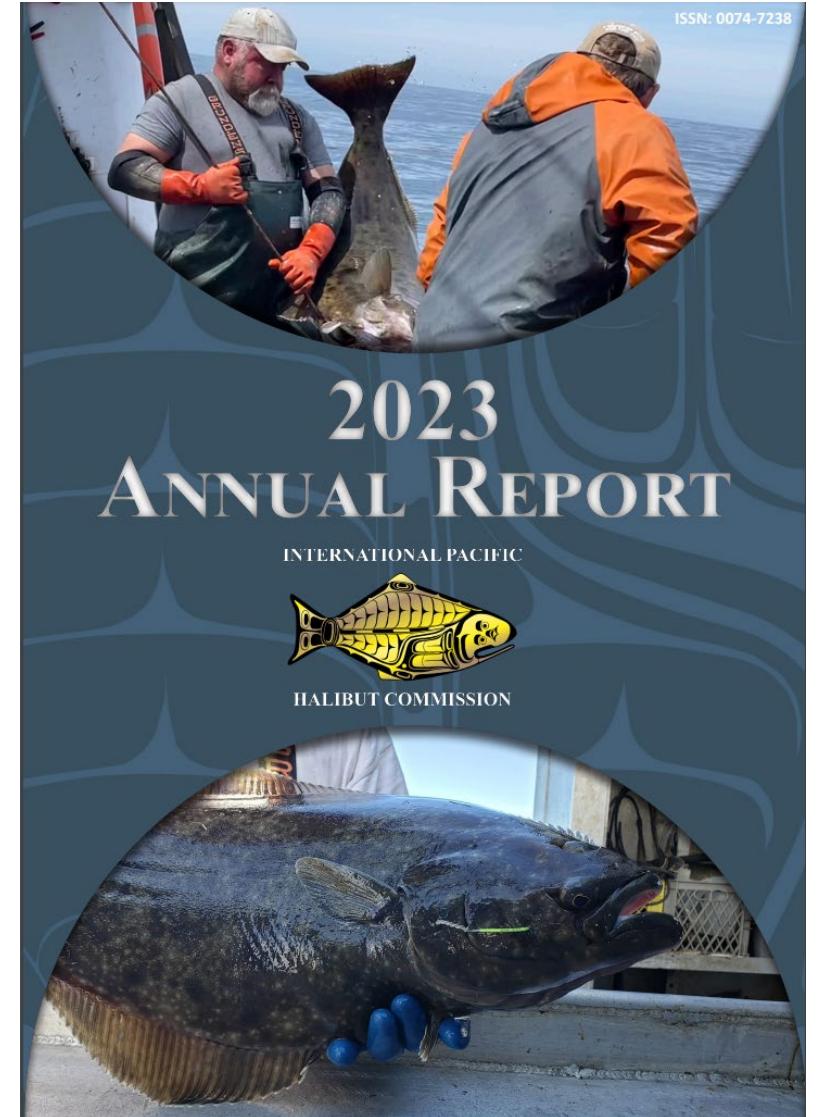


IPHC Publications and outreach

The 2023 Annual Report (1 January to 31 December 2023) was published on 28 March 2024 and is available for download from the IPHC website at the following link:

<https://www.iphc.int/uploads/2024/03/IPHC-2024-AR2023-R-2023-Annual-Report.pdf>.

The 2024 Annual Report is expected to be published by 1 March 2025



IPHC Publications and outreach

IPHC Circulars and Media Releases

- <https://www.iphc.int/library/documents/category/circulars>
 - 33 in total
- <https://www.iphc.int/library/documents/category/media-releases>
 - 23 in total



IPHC external engagement

Committees and external organisation appointments

North America:

- 1) *Canada – U.S. Groundfish Technical Committee* - Dr Josep Planas

Canada:

- 1) *Halibut Advisory Board (Canada)* - Dr David T. Wilson (Dr. Basia Hutniczak – Alternate)

United States of America:

- 1) *Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Plan Team* - Dr Allan Hicks
- 2) *Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team* - Dr Ian Stewart
- 3) *NPFMC Scientific and Statistical Committee* - Dr Ian Stewart
- 4) *North Pacific Research Board Science Panel* - Dr Josep Planas
- 5) *Marine Resource Education Program, North Pacific* – Dr Allan Hicks
- 6) *Fisheries Monitoring Science Committee (NOAA-Alaska)* – Dr Ray Webster
- 7) *Interagency electronic reporting system for commercial fishery landings in Alaska (eLandings) Steering Committee* – Dr Basia Hutniczak
- 8) *Benchmark workshop on Mackerel and Norwegian spring-spawning herring (WKBMACNSSH), reviewer.*
– Dr Allan Hicks



Academic affiliations

Affiliate Faculty:

- 1) Dr. Allan Hicks - University of Washington School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, Seattle, WA, USA
- 2) Dr. Ian Stewart - University of Washington School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, Seattle, WA, USA
- 3) Dr. Josep Planas - Alaska Pacific University, Anchorage, AK, USA

Graduate student committee member:

- 1) Dr. Allan Hicks - University of Massachusetts School for Marine Science & Technology, Dartmouth, MA, USA
- 2) Dr. Allan Hicks - University of Washington School of Aquatic & Fishery Sciences, Seattle, WA, USA
- 3) Dr. Ian Stewart - University of Washington School of Aquatic & Fishery Sciences, Seattle, WA, USA
- 4) Dr. Josep Planas - Alaska Pacific University, Anchorage, AK, USA



Publications

Published peer-reviewed journal papers

- **Dykstra, C.**, Wolf, N., Harris, B.P., **Stewart, I.J.**, **Hicks, A.**, Restrepo, F., **Planas, J.V.** 2024. Relating capture and physiological conditions to viability and survival of Pacific halibut discarded from commercial longline gear. *Ocean & Coastal Management*. 249: 107018. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2024.107018>
- **Sadorus, L. L.**, **Webster, R. A.** and Sullivan, M. 2024. Environmental conditions on the Pacific halibut fishing grounds obtained from a decade of coastwide oceanographic monitoring, and the potential application of these data in stock analyses. *Marine and Freshwater Research*. 75: MF23175. <https://doi.org/10.1071/MF23175>.
- **Simchick, C.**, Simeon, A., Bolstad, K., **Planas, J.V.** 2024. Endocrine patterns associated with ovarian development in female Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*). *General and Comparative Endocrinology*. 347: 114425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ygcen.2023.114425>
- Thomas, R.E., Gauthier, S., Grandin, C., **Hicks, A.**, Parker-Stetter, S. 2024 To trawl or not to trawl: Questioning core assumptions of trawl placement choice in fisheries acoustic surveys. *Fisheries Research*. 270: 106897. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2023.106897>
- **Hutniczak, B.**, **Wilson, D.**, **Stewart, I.**, **Hicks, A.** 2024. A hundred years of Pacific halibut management in the context of global events. *Frontiers in Marine Science*. 11:1424002. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2024.1424002>

Submitted peer-review journal papers – In review

- McGilliard, C.R., Ianelli, J., Cunningham, C., **Hicks, A.**, Hanselman, D., Stram, D., Henry, A. Evaluating Bering Sea Pacific halibut bycatch management options using closed-loop simulations in a dynamic, multi-agency setting. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*.
- Ritchie, B., Smeltz, T.S., **Stewart, I.J.**, Harris, B., Wolf, N. Exploring spatial and temporal patterns in the size-at-age of Pacific halibut in the Gulf of Alaska. *Fisheries Management and Ecology*.
- Adams, G., Holsman, K., Rovellini, A., **Stewart, I.J.**, Privitera-Johnson, K., Wasserman, S.N., Punt, A. Implications of predator-prey dynamics for single species management. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*.

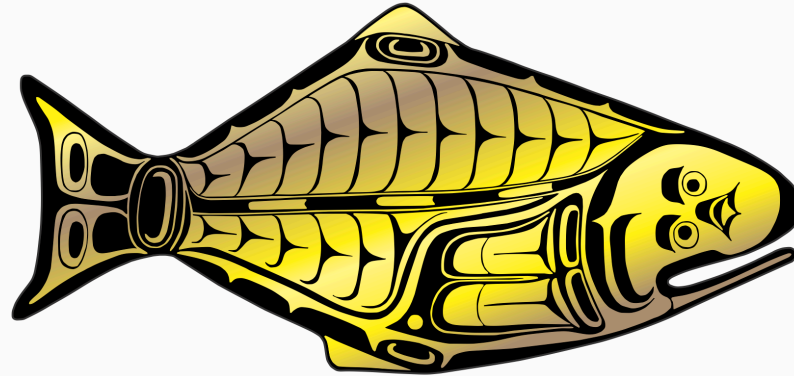


Recommendations

That the Commission **NOTE** paper IPHC-2025-AM101-04 Rev_1 that provides the Commission with an update on the IPHC Secretariat activities in 2024 not detailed in other papers before the Commission.



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