

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC



HALIBUT COMMISSION

Reports of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (2024)

Agenda item: 3.4
IPHC-2024-MSAB019-R
IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R
(P. Hulson & G. Mason)



MSAB Membership in 2024

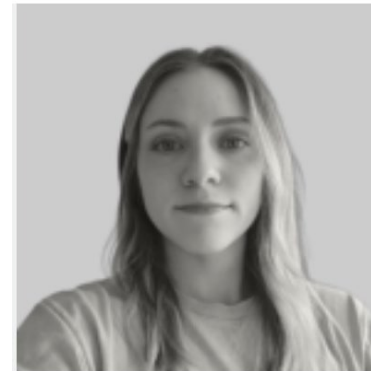
- Commercial Harvesters
 - 7 members (max 8)
 - 2 new members in 2024
- First Nations/Tribal Fisheries
 - 3 members (max 4)
 - 1 new member in 2024
- Processors
 - 2 members (max 4)
- Recreational fisheries
 - 4 members (max 4)
 - 1 new member in 2024
- Government agencies
 - 7 members (max 4 each country)
 - 2 new members in 2024



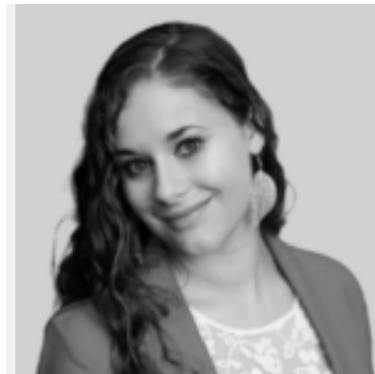
Linda Behnken
Commercial
U.S.A.



Michele Conrad
Commercial
U.S.A.



Emily Fitting
Treaty Tribes
U.S.A.



Gwyn Mason
Co-Chairperson
Canada



Michael Fowler
Recreational
Canada



Lynn Mattes
PFMC
U.S.A.



MSAB019

- 19th Session of the Management Strategy Advisory Board
 - Virtual Meeting
 - 1-3 May 2024
 - Gwyn Mason was nominated and elected as the Canadian co-chair
 - Focus on objectives and MSE Program of Work for 2024
 - Recommended a 4th Ad Hoc Meeting of the MSAB on 18 July 2024 to discuss objectives



Objectives

- [IPHC-2024-MSAB019-R](#), para 48: The MSAB **NOTED** that the estimated stock status of Pacific halibut is above a relative spawning biomass of 36% (a priority objective of the Commission, para. 23b), but the FISS WPUE, commercial WPUE, and estimated absolute spawning biomass are at their lowest values observed in many decades.
- [IPHC-2024-MSAB019-R](#), para 51: **NOTING** paragraph 48, the MSAB **RECOMMENDED** developing an objective and identifying a management procedure that addresses the current circumstances and differences in perception of the stock status.



Additional

- [IPHC-2024-MSAB019-R](#), para 32: The MSAB **REQUESTED** that outreach materials be developed by the Secretariat that synthesize the effect of the PDO (e.g. via recruitment) on the coastwide and regional stock dynamics and the relative effect of fishing in simple terms with interpretation and consequences of the outcomes.

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USING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION TO
INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTS OF FISHING AND THE
ENVIRONMENT ON PACIFIC HALIBUT



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MSAB020

- 20th Session of the Management Strategy Advisory Board
 - Virtual Meeting
 - 29-30 October 2024
 - Focus on recommendations related to objectives and reference MP
 - Consider the draft Harvest Strategy Policy



Fishery Objectives

- [IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R](#), para. 14. The MSAB **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission priority objective “optimise average coastwide TCEY” be changed to “**maximise average coastwide TCEY**” and that **this objective along with the variability in yield objective be given equal consideration** to allow for the evaluation of trade-offs between these two objectives.

Current Priority Objectives

- a) Maintain Pacific halibut female spawning biomass, above a female spawning biomass limit where the risk to the stock is regarded as unacceptable (RSBLIM), at least 95% of the time;
- b) Maintain Pacific halibut female spawning biomass, at least 50% of the time, at or above a threshold reference (fixed or dynamic) female spawning biomass that optimises fishing activities on a spatial and temporal scale relevant to the fishery;
- c) Optimise average coastwide yield given the constraints above;
- d) Limit annual changes in the coastwide mortality limit (TCEY) given the constraints above.



Working towards a potential new SB objective

- [IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R](#), para 16. The MSAB **NOTED** that **a new objective to maintain the coastwide TCEY above a threshold** may be useful because
 - it is meaningful to stakeholders,
 - may define a minimum coastwide TCEY necessary for economic viability, and
 - may be a proxy for maintaining catch-rates and absolute spawning biomass above a threshold which may be important to stakeholders.
- [IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R](#), para 17. The MSAB **NOTED** that **the $RSB_{36\%}$ objective** (b) is a useful objective because
 - it separates fishing effects from environmental effects on the stock,
 - scales with changes in productivity,
 - defines a desired relative spawning biomass to be at or above,
 - is based on a proxy for RSB_{MEY} , and
 - is an objective that is often important to fishery certification agencies



Reference Management Procedure

IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R, para. 41. The MSAB **RECOMMENDED**

- Updating the reference MP for one three-year cycle on a trial basis using a **triennial stock assessment frequency** (synchronised with the full stock assessment scheduled in 2025 to inform 2026 mortality limits). The coastwide TCEY would be based on **SPR=46%** in assessment years and based on the proportional change in the FISS O32 WPUE index in non-assessment years.
- The triennial stock assessment frequency may increase the median coastwide TCEY and reduce the interannual variability in the coastwide TCEY. A lower fishing intensity would also reduce the probability that the spawning biomass is less than the 2023 spawning biomass in the short- and long-term, and result in lower interannual variability.

2026

AM102

Stock Assessment

2027

AM103

FISS O32

2028

AM104

FISS O32

2029

AM105

Stock Assessment



Further Evaluations (Objectives and FISS)

IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R, para 31. The MSAB **REQUESTED** more research into performance metrics that may be informative of changes in the TCEY for non-assessment years and changes in the TCEY for assessment years when using a triennial assessment frequency.

IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R, para 37. **NOTING** that increased uncertainty due to reductions in the FISS design resulted in only declines in the median coastwide TCEY, the MSAB **REQUESTED** further exploration into the causes of this, especially since there is a monetary value being attributed to the FISS design Consideration of the draft Harvest Strategy Policy



Further Evaluations (MPs)

IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R, para 42. The MSAB **RECOMMENDED** further evaluations of the following MP elements:

- a) A triennial assessment frequency with each of the three FISS designs;
- b) Various empirical rules to determine the reference coastwide TCEY in non-assessment years;
- c) Constraints on the interannual change in the reference coastwide TCEY, such as a maximum change in the coastwide TCEY of 15%, a slow-up fast down approach, or a fixed TCEY in non-assessment years



Harvest Strategy Policy

IPHC-2024-MSA B020-R, para 47. The MSAB **RECOMMENDED** that the Commission consider endorsing the draft HSP **NOTING** that changes may be made to the HSP in the future as more research and MSE evaluations are completed.



MSAB021

IPHC-2024-MSAB020-R, para 49. The MSAB **RECOMMENDED** that the 21st Session of the MSAB (MSAB021) be held in the first half of May 2025, occur over 2-3 days, and be in-person, if possible.

13-15 MAY 2025

21st Session of the IPHC Management Strategy
Advisory Board (MSAB021)

Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB)

📍 JUNEAU, AK

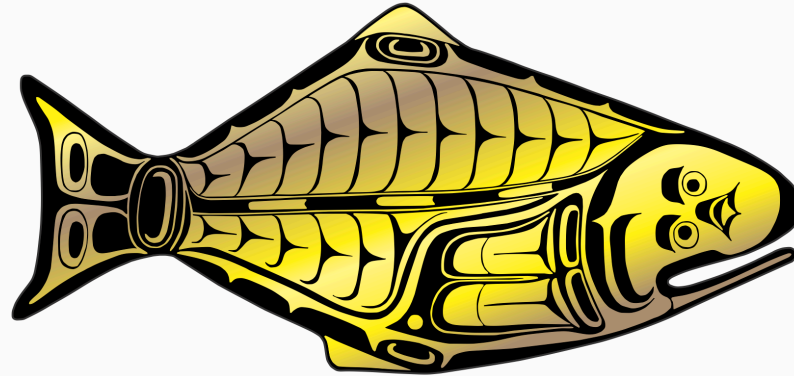


Summary of MSAB Meetings in 2024

- Two productive meetings
- Recommendations on objectives
- Recommendations on updating the reference MP
- Recommendations on future MSE work
- Support for the Harvest Strategy Policy document
- MSB021 scheduled for 13-15 May in Juneau



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