



UPDATE ON THE ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE 26TH SESSION OF THE IPHC SCIENTIFIC REVIEW BOARD (SRB026)

PREPARED BY: IPHC SECRETARIAT (17 AUGUST 2025)

PURPOSE

To provide the Scientific Review Board (SRB) with an opportunity to consider the progress made during the intersessional period, on the recommendations/requests arising from the SRB026.

BACKGROUND

At the SRB026, the members recommended/requested a series of actions to be taken by the IPHC Secretariat, as detailed in the SRB026 meeting report (IPHC–2025–SRB026–R) available from the IPHC website, and as provided in [Appendix A](#).

DISCUSSION

During the 27th Session of the SRB (SRB027), efforts will be made to ensure that any recommendations/requests for action are carefully constructed so that each contains the following elements:

- 1) a specific action to be undertaken (deliverable);
- 2) clear responsibility for the action to be undertaken (such as the IPHC Staff or SRB officers);
- 3) a desired time frame for delivery of the action (such as by the next session of the SRB or by some other specified date).

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the SRB:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2025-SRB027-03, that provided the SRB with an opportunity to consider the progress made during the inter-sessional period, in relation to the consolidated list of recommendations/requests arising from the previous SRB meeting (SRB026).
- 2) **AGREE** to consider and revise the actions as necessary, and to combine them with any new actions arising from SRB027.

APPENDICES

[Appendix A](#): Update on actions arising from the 26th Session of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB026).

APPENDIX A

Update on actions arising from the 26th Session of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB026)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Action No.	Description	Update
SRB026– Rec.01 (para. 16)	Research: Biology and ecology The SRB RECOMMENDED that questions about stock structure should be deprioritized in future research plans, as this question has now been answered quite robustly.	In Progress Update: The next IRMP is currently being drafted.
SRB026– Rec.02 (para. 18)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that the 2025 stock assessment incorporate the new maturity ogives, however, the incorporation of new fecundity information should be delayed until the next full stock assessment when more robust data and analysis of fecundity at age/weight information are available.	Completed Update: The preliminary 2025 stock assessment includes the updated maturity ogive and the fecundity information will be included in the next full stock assessment planned for 2028.
SRB026– Rec.03 (para. 19)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that the Secretariat incorporate potential environmental causes (e.g. effects of temperature) of changing maturity ogives or other changing biological parameters in the next 5YPIRM.	In Progress Update: The next IRMP is currently being drafted.
SRB026– Rec.04 (para. 21)	Pacific halibut stock assessment The SRB NOTED the bridging, data updates, and sensitivity analyses on the stock assessment and RECOMMENDED adopting those changes and moving forward with the final models presented at SRB026.	Completed Update: The preliminary 2025 stock assessment includes all progress presented in June at SRB026.
SRB026– Rec.05 (para. 22)	The SRB RECOMMENDED conducting a sensitivity analysis of all ensemble models to the use of a Normal (rather than Lognormal) prior distribution on natural mortality. The Normal distribution is the least informative option when an informative prior is needed.	Completed Update: The results of this analysis are presented in IPHC-2025-SRB027-07.
SRB026– Rec.06 (para. 23)	The SRB RECOMMENDED an analysis of historical performance of the decision table metrics, i.e. a retrospective analysis of stock assessment outputs used in management advice.	Completed Update: The results of this analysis are presented in IPHC-2025-SRB027-07.

SRB026– Rec.07 (para. 24)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that recruitment projections in the stock assessment and Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) incorporate a random-walk starting from the most recent reliable recruitment estimate to constrain expected short-term recruitment around recent estimates rather than immediately reverting to the stock-recruitment relationship.	Partially completed Update: Sensitivity to projected recruitment has been explored for both the stock assessment (IPHC-2025-SRB027-07) and MSE (IPHC-2025-SRB027-08.).
SRB026– Rec.08 (para. 25)	The SRB RECOMMENDED deprioritizing incorporation of depredation in the assessment based on sensitivity analysis presented at SRB026. Instead, a research approach and activities should be presented in the next 5YPIRM.	Completed Update: These topics are included in the IPHC Integrated Research and Monitoring Plan.
SRB026– Rec.09 (para. 26)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that a candidate state space assessment model (e.g. WHAM) be developed for Pacific halibut and presented by SRB032, tentatively scheduled for June 2028. Progress toward this modelling framework may also be presented at interim SRB meetings.	In Progress Update: Additional work on this topic will begin after the final 2025 stock assessment is completed.
SRB026– Rec.10 (para. 30)	Management strategy evaluation NOTING that “Overfished” implies that fishing was the cause of a current biomass state while the term “Depleted” is agnostic about the cause of low biomass, the SRB RECOMMENDED that the Secretariat consider defining “Overfished” relative to a dynamic reference point that incorporates productivity change while “Depleted” should refer to an absolute biomass reference point.	Completed Update: The concept of Depleted has been discussed with the Commission and is defined in the draft Harvest Strategy Policy.
SRB026– Rec.11 (para. 31)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that the Secretariat/Commission adopt an absolute biomass limit defining “Depleted” to avoid low biomass levels where stock dynamics are poorly understood such that recovery projections would be unreliable.	In Progress Update: Potential absolute biomass limits are discussed in IPHC-2025-SRB027-08.
SRB026– Rec.12 (para. 33)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that the Secretariat evaluate via simulation the ability to detect overfishing (based on the proposed definition) under scenarios of reduced assessment performance when defining “Overfishing” based on probabilities of stock status.	In Progress Update: Additional work on this topic will occur after the MSE OM is updated following the completion of the 2025 full stock assessment.

SRB026– Rec.13 (para. 34)	The SRB RECOMMENDED that the Secretariat consider and justify alternative timelines to the three-year rebuilding period specified in the proposed definition of “overfishing” since a three-year period is probably unrealistic for rebuilding timelines.	Completed Update: The definition of Overfishing has been updated such that it is consistent with a rebuilding plan. See document IPHC-2025-SRB027-08.
SRB026– Rec.14 (para. 41)	Age composition data (both fishery-dependent and fishery-independent) The SRB RECOMMENDED testing whether the addition of covariates including region and sex improves the AI age estimation accuracy.	Pending Update:
SRB026– Rec.15 (para. 44)	NOTING that aging plays a major role in the stock assessment and that multiple methods are being investigated, the SRB RECOMMENDED that the next 5YPIRM present a strategic analysis of the future of aging. This should include the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A description of how these approaches may be used, integrated, and tested in the assessment; b) A plan for cost-benefit analysis of alternative approaches including hybrid approaches that use multiple methods; c) Implications of potential future reduced spatial coverage in the FISS on achieving age sampling goals. 	In Progress Update: The next IRMP is currently being drafted.

REQUESTS

Action No.	Description	Update
SRB026– Req.01 (para. 8)	Outcomes of the 101st Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM101) RECALLING that at the 100 th Session of the IPHC, the Commission adopted a Statement on Climate Change, that is available on the IPHC website: IPHC-2024-PP-05 , the SRB AGREED to consider and advise on the potential implications of climate change for the conservation and management of Pacific halibut, and any related impacts on the Contracting Parties. The SRB REQUESTED the addition of an agenda item on this topic for SRB028.	Pending Update: Will be added and published in accordance with the IPHC Rules of Procedure (2024)

SRB026– Req.02 (para. 39)	<i>Fishery-independent data: Updates to space-time modelling</i> The SRB NOTED the development of a spatial model of maturity and REQUESTED that the Secretariat present updates on the space-time model of maturity at age at SRB027.	<i>In progress</i> Update: See paper 10.
SRB026– Req.03 (para. 43)	<i>Age composition data (both fishery-dependent and fishery-independent)</i> The SRB REQUESTED an evaluation of the spatial generalization of a model trained on otoliths in one area to predict ages from otoliths collected in another area.	<i>Pending</i> Update: