OUTCOMES OF THE 102ND SESSION OF THE IPHC ANNUAL MEETING (AM102)

PREPARED BY: IPHC SECRETARIAT (D. WILSON; 15 APRIL 2026)

PURPOSE

To provide the SRB with the outcomes of the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102), relevant to the mandate of the SRB.

BACKGROUND

Nil

DISCUSSION

During the course of the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102) the Commission made a number of specific recommendations and requests for action regarding the stock assessment, MSE process, and the Integrated Research and Monitoring Plan. Relevant sections from the report of the meeting are provided in Appendix A for the SRB's consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That the SRB:

1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2026-SRB028-04 which details the outcomes of the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102), relevant to the mandate of the SRB.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Excerpts from the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102) Report (IPHC-2026-AM102-R).

APPENDIX A

Excerpts from the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102) Report

(IPHC-2026-AM102-R)

3.4 Report of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB)

(para. 11) The Commission **NOTED** the Reports of the 26th and 27th Sessions of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (IPHC-2025-SRB026-R; IPHC-2025-SRB027-R) that were presented by Dr Olaf Jenson (University of Wisconsin-Madison), as the Chairperson, Dr Sean Cox had stepped down from the SRB at the close of the SRB027 meeting.

(para. 12) The Commission **THANKED** Dr Cox for his chairmanship since the SRB was formed. Dr Cox has contributed greatly to the IPHC scientific peer review process and has led the SRB to where it is today. The IPHC Secretariat is actively seeking to fill the vacancy on the SRB prior to SRB028.

(para. 13) The Commission **CONSIDERED** the recommendations made by the SRB in 2025 and **AGREED** to take them into consideration when deliberating on relevant agenda items throughout the AM102.

6. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION

6.1 IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation & Harvest Strategy Policy

(para. 54) The Commission **NOTED** paper IPHC-2026-AM102-11 that provided the Commission with MSE results completed in 2025, a Harvest Strategy Policy (HSP) table, and an MSE/HSP Program of Work for 2026.

(para. 55) The Commission **RECALLED** that a Harvest Strategy Policy (HSP) was adopted by the Commission in late 2025. The HSP can be found at https://www.iphc.int/research-monitoring/harvest-strategy-policy.

(para. 56) The Commission **NOTED** that the 2026 MSE and HSP Program of Work will include the following high-priority topics:

a) Update and recondition the MSE Operating Model in accordance with the schedule defined in the Harvest Strategy Policy;

b) Evaluate a range of SPR values to determine if the optimal reference coastwide fishing intensity is different than the current reference fishing intensity (F43%) defined in the HSP;

c) Investigate productivity regimes to determine how the Pacific halibut population and fisheries respond to different productivity regimes, if the optimal reference fishing intensity differs across productivity regimes, and how productivity regimes may be incorporated into a Management Procedure;

d) Further develop the Depleted concept and identify a limit reference point below which recovery of the Pacific halibut population would be uncertain.

(para. 57) The Commission **NOTED** that the 2026 MSE and HSP Program of Work will include the following low-priority topics, which may not be completed before AM103:

a) Improve the estimation model used in the MSE framework to better characterize the stock assessment in the simulations;

b) Evaluate potential management actions to invoke when approaching a depleted limit reference point;

c) Evaluate additional elements of Management Procedures which may include a triennial assessment frequency, constraints and smoothers on the interannual change in the TCEY, and empirical rules to determine the reference TCEY in years without a stock assessment;

d) Determine reference points using the updated MSE Operating Model (e.g. F_{MSY} and MSY);

e) Develop guidance documents for the Harvest Strategy Policy (e.g. specifications of a rebuilding plan).

(para. 58) The Commission **NOTED** that the 2026 MSE and HSP Program of Work should not include topics related to the distribution of the TCEY, as this is part of the decision-making process and not part of the management procedure, as described in the Harvest Strategy Policy.

(para. 59) The Commission **NOTED** that outcomes of the 2026 MSE workplan (e.g. an optimal fishing intensity) may be used to update the Harvest Strategy Policy in the future.

8. FISS DESIGN EVALUATIONS 2026-2028

8.1 2026-28 FISS design evaluation

(para. 75) The Commission **ADOPTED** a revised 2026 FISS design (Fig. 6) on the understanding that vessel availability, bids received, additional bait needs, and field staff recruitment may impact operational feasibility (options refer to those in IPHC-2026-AM102-13, Appendix A, Table A.1) (total FISS stations 717 for 2026):

a) Option 2: Supplemented Reduced Loss design (692 stations previously agreed to at IM101; para. 66);

b) Option 4: IPHC Regulatory Area 3A: Replace Prince William Sound (67 stations) with Gore Point (48 stations);

c) Option 5: IPHC Regulatory Area 3A: Replace Yakutat (64 stations) with Fairweather (51 stations);

d) Option 6: IPHC Regulatory Area 2B: Add Goose Island (57 stations).

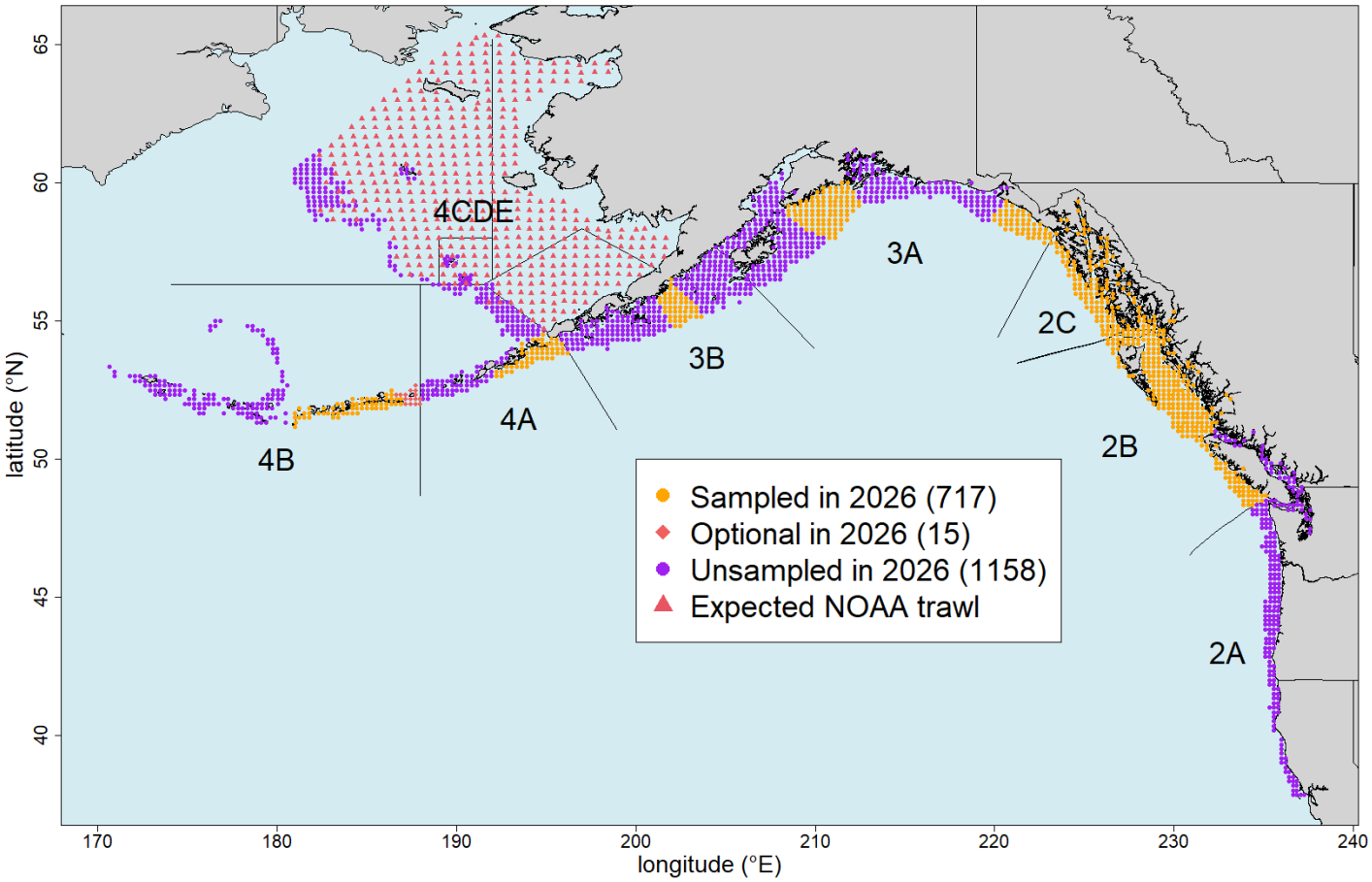

Figure 6. The AM102 approved 2026 FISS design (orange circles).