IPHC Fishery Regulation Proposal:

Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut - IPHC Regulatory Area 2B (Sect. 27) - Daily bag limit in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B

SUBMITTED BY: CANADA (FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA) (30 OCTOBER 2026)

Directed Commercial ☐ Recreational ☒ Subsistence ☐ Non-directed commercial ☐ All ☐

All Regulatory Areas ☐ All Alaska Regulatory Areas ☐ All U.S. Regulatory Areas ☐

2A ☐ 2B ☒ 2C ☐ 3A ☐ 3B ☐ 4A ☐ 4B ☐ 4C ☐ 4D ☐ 4E ☐

PURPOSE

To propose the daily bag limit of up to three fish per day per person in the recreational fishery in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B beginning on or after 1 August of each year.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Canada is proposing to keep changes made to section 27 (Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut – IPHC Regulatory Area 2B) of the IPHC Fishery Regulations to allow a maximum daily bag limit of three (3) fish per day, per person, beginning on or after 1 August. The purpose of the proposed change is to align IPHC fishery regulations with Canada's domestic sportfishing regulations, to simplify unnecessary regulatory complexity, and to retain Canada's ability and autonomy to manage its domestic fishery.

The Commission previously supported and approved an increase in the Canadian daily bag limit from two (2) per day, to three (3) per day, on a one-year basis from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, again from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, before approving the provision to be in effect from 2023-2025, inclusive, then again for the 2026 season. Annually the Sport Fishing Advisory Board (SFAB) works with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to model a pre-season fishing plan with the objectives of maintaining a full recreational season (February to December) and supporting the recreational sector's access to the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) it is allocated. Canada has chosen to not utilize this conditional flexibility since it was put into place in 2023, though it was considered for the 2026 season. However, this flexibility has increased Canadian domestic benefits, whilst allowing for the effective in-season management of the resource.

The IPHC daily bag limit of two (2) fish per day constrains Canada's flexibility to make critical in-season changes to the fishing plan to support meeting TAC goals and Canadian domestic fishery objectives.

The SFAB has a long history of collaborating with DFO in Canada's endeavours to achieve IPHC objectives, while maximizing Canadian domestic objectives. DFO and SFAB meet monthly in-season to review timely and robust recreational catch estimates to consider and evaluate appropriate fishery management measures. Increased regulatory flexibility would augment the existing successful management tool kit to achieve improved fishery performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commission:

1) **NOTE** IPHC Fishery Regulation proposal IPHC-2026-IM102-PropB2, which proposes the daily bag limit of up to three fish per day per person beginning on or after 1 August in the recreational fishery in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Suggested Regulatory Language.

APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

27. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Area 2B

(1) In all waters off British Columbia:[6, 7]

(a) the recreational (sport) fishing season will open on 1 February;

(b) the recreational (sport) fishing season will close when the recreational (sport) fishery limit allocated by DFO is taken, or 31 December, whichever is earlier; and

(c) the daily bag limit is two (2) Pacific halibut of any size per day, per person, and may be increased to a daily bag limit of three (3) Pacific halibut per day, per person on or after 1 August. ~~This provision shall remain in effect through 2026, unless extended by a vote of the Commission.~~

(2) In British Columbia, no person shall fillet, mutilate, or otherwise disfigure a Pacific halibut in any manner that prevents the determination of minimum size or the number of fish caught, possessed, or landed.

(3) The possession limit for Pacific halibut in the waters off the coast of British Columbia is three Pacific halibut.[6, 7]

[6] DFO could implement more restrictive regulations for the recreational (sport) fishery, therefore anglers are advised to check the current Federal or Provincial regulations prior to fishing.

[7] For regulations on the experimental recreational fishery implemented by DFO check the current Federal or Provincial regulations.