



**IPHC Fishery Regulation Proposal:**

**Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut - IPHC Regulatory Area 2B (Sect. 28) -  
Daily bag limit in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B**

**SUBMITTED BY: CANADA (FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA) (28 OCTOBER 2022 & 26 JANUARY 2023)**

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.

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

Canada is proposing changes to section 28 (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. 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, and once again from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. 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 used this conditional flexibility and implemented an increase to the daily bag limit from two (2) fish per day to three (3) fish day in both August 2021 and August 2022. This flexibility has increased Canadian domestic benefits, whilst ensuring that the recreational sector fished conservatively early in the season to allow for a full season, and remained well within its TAC.

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.

Canada had previously submitted these proposed changes to section 28 (Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut – IPHC Regulatory Area 2B) for consideration at the 98th Session of the IPHC Annual meeting (AM098). The conditional flexibility that was implemented in 2021 was carried forward to the 2022 season, pending further information. A detailed presentation of Canada’s Recreational Halibut Fishery management and monitoring measures was delivered at the 12th Special Session of the IPHC (SS012) on 25 February 2022.

**Update from 26 January 2023:** The Commissioners have discussed the regulatory proposal B2 for the flexibility to a 3/day bag limit for the 2B recreational fishing sector and have come to a compromise that they will debate a revised proposal permitting the flexibility to be implemented (if deemed appropriate) on or after August 1st. They also agreed to have this in effect for the next 3 seasons (2023, 2024, 2025) unless extended by vote by the Commission.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** IPHC Fishery Regulation proposal IPHC-2023-AM099-PropB2, which proposes the daily bag limit of up to three fish per day per person in the recreational fishery in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B.

## APPENDICES

[Appendix A](#): Suggested Regulatory Language.

### APPENDIX A

#### SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

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

- (1) In all waters off British Columbia:<sup>6, 7</sup>
  - (a) the recreational (sport) fishing season will open on 1 February ~~unless more restrictive regulations are in place~~;
  - (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 2025, 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.<sup>6, 7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> For regulations on the experimental recreational fishery implemented by DFO check the current Federal or Provincial regulations.