

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

MINUTES

OF THE

SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

Victoria, British Columbia

January 23 - 26, 1995

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

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OF THE
SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING**
Victoria, British Columbia

January 23 - January 26, 1995

PARTICIPANTS

Commissioners

Richard Beamish, Chairman
Steven Pennoyer, Vice-chairman
Ralph Hoard
Kris Norosz
Alan Shepard
Brian Van Dorp

Commission staff

Donald A. McCaughran, Director
Stephen H. Hoag, Assistant Director
Calvin Blood
William Clark
Tracee Geernaert
Heather Gilroy
Gerald Lariviere
Michael Larsen
Ana Parma
Gordon Peltonen
Lauri Sadorus
Phyllis Severeid
Patrick Sullivan
Robert Trumble
Gregg Williams

Advisors

Bruce Leaman
Loh-Lee Low

**INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION
SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING**

The Empress Hotel, Victoria, British Columbia

January 23 - January 26, 1995

SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

Monday - January 23

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--|------------------------------|
| a.m. - | 8:00 - 9:00 | IPHC Administrative Session | Buckingham Room - Empress |
| | 9:00 - 12:00 | Public Session - (may be extended after lunch if necessary) | Lecture Theatre - Conf. Ctr. |
| p.m. - | 1:30 - 5:00 | IPHC Administrative Session | Buckingham Room - Empress |
| | 1:30 - 5:30 | Conference Board | Saanich Room - Conf. Ctr. |
| | 6:30 - 8:30 | Reception | Crystal Ballroom - Empress |

Tuesday - January 24

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| a.m. - | 8:30 - 5:00 | IPHC Administrative Session | Buckingham Room - Empress |
| | 8:30 - 5:00 | Conference Board | Saanich Room - Conf. Ctr. |

Wednesday - January 25

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---|---------------------------|
| a.m. - | 8:30 - 9:30 | Conference Board Report | Saanich Room - Conf. Ctr. |
| a.m. - | 9:30 - 12:00 | IPHC Administrative Session | Buckingham Room - Empress |
| p.m. - | 1:30 - 5:00 | IPHC, Conference Board, and Processors | Saanich Room - Empress |

Thursday - January 26

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a.m. - | 8:30 - 12:00 | IPHC Meeting (Public Welcome) | Oak Bay Room - Conf. Ctr. |
| p.m. - | 1:30 - 5:00 | IPHC Administrative Session | Oak Bay Room - Conf. Ctr. |

**INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION
SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING**

The Empress Hotel, Victoria, British Columbia
January 23 - January 26, 1995

PUBLIC SESSION - January 23, 1995

GRAND BALLROOM

9:00 a.m.

OPENING

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Introductions

Commissioners

Staff

Guests

9:15 a.m.

DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

9:30 a.m.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Review of the 1994 Fishery

Bycatch, Sport, and Personal Use Estimates

Population Assessment, 1994

Long Term Trends in Stock Abundance

Opening and Closing Dates for the Fishery

Staff Regulatory Proposals: 1995

10:30 a.m.

COFFEE

11:00 a.m. - 12 Noon **QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

(Continued after lunch
if needed)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

6:30 p.m.

RECEPTION (No Host) - Grand Ballroom

SUMMARY OF MAJOR DECISIONS

RECOMMENDED REGULATIONS

- 1) Catch limits (pounds, net weight) recommended as follows: Area 3A (20,000,000), Area 3B (3,700,000), Area 4A (1,950,000), Area 4B (2,310,000), Area 4C (770,000), Area 4D (770,000), and Area 4E (120,000). Note: The Area 2A, 2B, and 2C recommended quotas of 520,000, 9,520,000, and 9,000,000 pounds, respectively, were not approved by the Commission and will be dependent on unilateral approval by the individual governments.
- 2) Fishing periods recommended as follows: Area 2A (four 10-hour fishing periods on 7/5, 7/18, 8/1, 8/15), Area 2A treaty indian fishery, and Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 4 to begin on March 15 and end on November 15.
- 3) The remainder of the Area 2A catch sharing plan including the sport fishery will be implemented under NMFS regulation.
- 4) New licensing procedures for Area 2A recommended by the Pacific Fishery Management Council which specify: 1) a vessel may be licensed for only one of three fisheries; commercial, sport charter, or incidental salmon troll; 2) all commercial license applications must be postmarked by April 30 in order for a license to be issued.
- 5) Modifications in vessel clearance requirements for Area 4 which specify that when a vessel is leaving either Area 4C or 4D, it must clear at either St. George or St. Paul Islands. Clearance may be made by VHF radio provided that visual identification of the vessel can be confirmed from shore. The same procedural requirements will apply to vessels fishing in Area 4B that clear in and out of Nazan Bay.
- 6) All fish must be dressed prior to being offloaded from the catching vessel.
- 7) Hook strippers are legalized in all waters provided that all non-retained halibut are released using one of the careful release methods.
- 8) The abolishment of Area 4D-N.
- 9) Retention of incidental halibut is allowed in the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A.

ADMINISTRATIVE

- 1) 1994 Interim meeting minutes were approved.

- 2)1994 Annual meeting minutes were approved.
- 3)Interim meeting, 1995 will be held on November 28 in the Seattle offices.
- 4)Annual meeting, 1996 will be held in Seattle on January 22 to 25.
- 5)Chairman for 1995 interim meeting and 1996 annual meeting will be Steven Pennoyer.
- 6)Vice-chairman for 1995 interim meeting and 1996 annual meeting will be Richard Beamish.
- 7)There will be a special Commission meeting for bycatch in July.

MINUTES

ANNUAL MEETING

January 23 - 26, 1995

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION - MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 1995

The meeting was called to order by the Commission chairman, Dr. Richard Beamish. The agenda for the week and the schedule for the public session were reviewed.

The minutes for the 1994 annual meeting were approved and passed.

Mr. Gerry Lariviere presented the budget. The Commissioners reviewed the 1994 expenditures, and discussed the 1995 budget, specifically, workmen's compensation, permanent and temporary salaries, flexibilities in the budgetary schedule, research funds generated by charters, and Alaskan IFQ expenditures for port sampling and logbooks. Ms. Heather Gilroy confirmed that the Commission paid for the first year of logbooks in the Canadian IVQ fishery. The proposed 1996 budget was reviewed quickly. Dr. Beamish reminded the commissioners and staff that budgets will be cut rather than expanded in the future due to 25-40% cuts that Canadian departments are experiencing.

The administrative session was adjourned.

PUBLIC SESSION - MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 1995

Dr. Beamish welcomed the attendees. He gave an opening statement regarding the continuing health of the halibut fishery in a time when other fisheries are being depleted, and explained that this meeting may hold more importance than in past years because of the implementation of the IFQ fishery. Dr. Beamish introduced the other commissioners, advisors, staff, and special guests.

Director McCaughran introduced staff presentations which included: Heather Gilroy - "Review of the Fishery"; Dr. Robert Trumble - "Bycatch, Sport, and Personal Use Estimates"; Dr. Patrick Sullivan - "Pacific Halibut Stock Assessment". Following Dr. Sullivan's presentation, Dr. McCaughran explained further regarding CEYs in the Bering Sea based on fishing ground habitat.

After a coffee break the staff presentations continued and included: Dr. Ana Parma - "Long term trends in Stock Abundance"; Dr. William Clark - "Opening and Closing Dates for the Fishery"; Mr. Stephen Hoag - "Staff Regulatory Proposals: 1995".

After a break for lunch, Dr. McCaughran introduced Mr. Steve Meyer from National Marine Fisheries Service enforcement to give a presentation discussing the four-tier approach to

enforcement for the Alaskan IFQ program. Following Mr. Meyer, a presentation was made by LCDR Walt Hunnings regarding the enforcement role of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The floor was opened to questions and comments which included: 1) clarification of decreased size at age noted by Commission biologists, and how it may affect future assessment; 2) further explanation was needed concerning the use of a habitat-based allocation of quota in Area 4 as recommended by the Commission staff; 3) concern that the use of CPUE in Area 4 estimates could skew results because of new fishers within the past few years who did not know the area. Also, dates of fishing could also affect CPUE. The staff explained that while more research can be done in this area, historical changes in the CPUE did not dramatically affect the estimates; 4) protests from a number of meeting participants to the new procedure used in Area 4 quota allocation; 5) clarification was needed explaining why the assessment presented by the IPHC staff was different for Area 2B than in past years. The staff explained that it was the same message of concern about inflated fleet CPUE as had been made in previous years and may reflect a change in catchability under the IVQ system; 6) explanations were requested of and given by Commissioners as to why bycatch has not been lowered; 7) some advocacy of scientific methods used in Area 4 assessment, but caution about using them in this year of already great change in the fishery due to the IFQ program; 8) concern by fishers about decreasing Area 4C quota recommended by the IPHC staff, and whether there would be any harm in fishing as they have been the past decade.

After a short coffee break, the question and comment period was continued and included; 1) protests over high bycatch and urges to keep working all avenues to decrease it; 2) further explanation was requested concerning the proposed regulation change to allow hook strippers in the U.S. halibut/black cod fishery; 3) concern was expressed over surveys not mirroring actual fishery; 4) explanations were requested on landing procedures of U.S. fish in Canadian ports; 5) verification was needed concerning various regulations governing the IFQ fishery in Alaska; 6) further explanation was requested regarding biomass and recruitment estimation in general; 7) an advocacy of more than one meeting a year for industry, commissioners, and staff. Dr. Beamish responded to this by asking the conference board to propose a possible procedure to accomplish this.

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION - TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 1995

Mr. Gerald Lariviere continued the budget presentation. There was some concern by the commissioners over an expense for an official logbook program, that they had not been informed of before this meeting. Mr. Hoag noted that there has always been an unofficial program, but with the advent of the IFQ system, the need for a mandatory program was greater. Mr. Pennoyer stated that he could not promise funds for such a program. The total estimated expense for IFQ monitoring without the logbook program would be \$125,000. Dr. Beamish noted that it is likely that Canada will not be able to contribute the \$82,000 requested. Also, the \$30,000 contribution from the HAB board needs to be approved every year.

After some further discussion regarding the source of funds for port monitoring, Dr. Beamish noted his concern over the fact that the CPUE in the stock assessment for Area 2B had not been reconciled and that coastwide assessment may be affected by changes in CPUE when the U.S. begins its IQ program.

Ms. Joyce Quintal-McGrath noted that Canadian DFO is experiencing a 40% budget cut in the next 3-5 years, and Dr. McCaughran added that the Commission staff has experienced an 11% cut in staff in the past year.

There was some further discussion about a possible logbook program for 1996 since 1995 would not be possible due to timing and cost. It was suggested that the staff investigate ways to obtain information needed for the 1996 season with the groundfish logbook program already in place.

After concluding that the budget could not be approved as is, Dr. Beamish decided that the commissioners would meet in an executive session from 1:30 to 2:30 to discuss it further.

Following a discussion regarding the retention of Coopers and Lybrand as the Commission auditors, it was decided that the audit would go out for bid in 1995.

The Commissioners were given a review of staff research projects already underway as well as those recommended by the staff for the future, and whether funds had been committed for each project.

Following a coffee break, the remainder of the research projects were reviewed. No action was taken at this time.

Dr. Beamish asked for a review of staff regulatory recommendations. There was a lengthy explanation regarding the Area 2A/2B allocations and how CPUE was figured into the stock assessment for 1995. The Canadian commissioners indicated that fishers reported experiencing high CPUE. The staff explained that while higher CPUEs have been observed in the fishery and are included in the standard assessment, they may not represent an increase in halibut abundance.

There was discussion regarding similar problems in the assessment of Alaskan areas with the onset of the IFQ program. Dr. McCaughran cautioned against CPUE as the sole indicator of abundance, but noted spatial analysis as one possible direction for future assessments.

A discussion took place regarding Dr. Clark's presentation on winter fishing. Noting lack of definitive evidence, Dr. Beamish noted that he saw no problem with a March 1 opening date for Area 2B, and commented that there has been some interest from fishers and industry of the two countries to meet at another point during the year to discuss opening and closing dates.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game distributed two handouts to the commissioners regarding sport catch in Alaska. Ms. Norosz noted concern over the lack of sport catch accountability in

Canada, and to a lesser degree in the U.S.

The stock assessment discussion was resumed regarding Areas 2C and 3. There was concern that in spite of conservative quota recommendations from fishers in Area 2C for the past several years, the quota recommended by the staff had decreased substantially. Decreasing size at age differences as well as the new biomass projection model of assessment were noted as reasons for the decrease.

Area 4 quota recommendations were reviewed. There was concern over the dramatically decreased recommendation for Area 4C. Dr. McCaughran reminded the commissioners that Area 4C originated for allocative reasons in the first place and not biological.

After a break for lunch, the commissioners held an executive session for one hour.

Discussion resumed on Area 4 quotas. Since the areas were not divided for biological reasons, but rather allocative ones, Dr. McCaughran suggested combining Areas 4D, 4C, and 4E. Mr. Pennoyer reminded the commissioners that there is no avenue for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) to change allocation boundaries for the 1995 season, if the Commission should change the areas.

The following administrative proposals were put forth:

- 1)The 1996 annual meeting be held in Seattle at an economical location; perhaps the National Marine Fisheries Service or the University of Washington;
- 2)The 1996 annual meeting take place beginning January 22;
- 3)The 1995 interim meeting will be held on November 28 in the Seattle offices.

Mr. Joe Scordino gave a brief presentation on the changes in Area 2A management as put forth by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC). The changes include: 1) splitting of fishery into incidental and commercial; 2) commercial fishery will not occur in Area 2A-1; 3) different sport areas will be set than presently documented; 4) the establishment of an on-land 2 daily bag limit in Washington and a 1 daily bag limit in Oregon; 5) vessels can fish either commercially or as a sport charter, but not both. If commercial is chosen, then a choice must be made between directed and salmon troll incidental catch; 6) licenses must be obtained from the IPHC before May 1. He noted that the Commission needs to take action on the licensing measures and quotas.

Following a discussion of sport charter fishery management in Alaskan waters, Ms. Norosz suggested a better outreach by the IPHC staff to make sure license requirements are met in the U.S. charter fleet, as well as a letter to the NPFMC regarding IPHC jurisdictional role in the fishery.

Regarding Area 2B sport fishery management, Dr. Beamish commented that there is currently a proposal by commercial fishers to Ottawa which would require charter vessels to buy quota. Dr. Leaman noted that although there is some agreement on how to monitor the sport fishery in Canada, the cost would be about \$80,000. This figure, however, includes all species. There was some discussion of the authority of the Commission regarding the sport fishery. Jon Pollard will provide

a report on state, federal, and Commission authority for sport halibut management.

After a short coffee break, a review of Alaskan IFQ enforcement and accounting for catch, as well as an Area 2B update on IVQ enforcement was given. No action was taken.

Discussion moved to bycatch management. Mr. Scordino gave a review of the Area 2A bycatch management plan which included: 1) refining bycatch estimates; 2) a 2-year observer program; 3) Oregon trawl commission fee proposal to charge groundfish fishers to fund observer program; 4) voluntary observer program already in place in the whiting fishery; 5) PFMC efforts to create a mandatory observer program; 6) funds earmarked for west coast and bycatch programs; 7) Oregon Department of Fish and Game has acquired funds to look at gear modifications. There was some further discussion regarding collection of fees.

Dr. Beamish gave a review of the bycatch management plan for Area 2B. The plan currently includes reducing bycatch to 1 million pounds by 1997 with the use of caps and observers. The aim is to get observer coverage on 10% of the hauls and then using groundfish catch as the index of halibut bycatch. Dr. Beamish suggested more discussion on new ways to manage bycatch (i.e. penalizing areas with higher bycatch).

Mr. Pennoyer gave the review of bycatch management in Alaskan waters. He mentioned that rates for each vessel are now being published even though the confidentiality issue is at risk, and data are becoming more accessible because of satellite systems. He gave an update of various programs already in affect, and commented that the reduction of halibut mortality caps is not altering the behavior of the fleet, but rather having the opposite effect of increased bycatch rates.

The commissioners approved the release of the Halibut Bycatch Working Group report.

Mr. Gregg Williams distributed a report on halibut bycatch in the sablefish fishery in the winter months in the Aleutian Islands.

COMMISSION/CONFERENCE BOARD SESSION WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1995

Mr. Greg Best read the conference board minutes. Following his review of the conference board recommendations for area quotas, a minority report was read which protested the use of habitat allocation of quota in Area 4, and asked that any decrease of overall Area 4 quota be taken proportionally in all areas.

Mr. Robert Alverson noted that it is fisher opinion based on experience that there is more habitat in Area 4B than identified by the staff, and fishers have not witnessed a reduction in catch to warrant a decreased quota. A larger quota in Area 4C was advocated noting that seasons have been set too

early in the year to represent the peak influx of halibut into the shallow Pribilof waters.

After some further explanation of various recommendations, Mr. Hoag confirmed that the conference board did not object to a mandatory logbook program as long as the logbooks were combined with other groundfish logs so a separate book would not be necessary.

Regarding industry proposals, Ms. Linda Kozak explained the proposal to evaluate retention of halibut during the winter closure by IFQ holders in the groundfish hook and line fishery. Her group advocated that a dialogue take place throughout the year among industry, the Commission, and the councils.

After reading the Recommended Bycatch statement to both governments, Mr. Best asked that all industry proposals dealing with sport charters be distributed to the Conference Board.

Mr. Best noted the large number of interests being represented in the Conference Board making it a very large body to work within the time frame put forth at the annual meeting. He made a number of preliminary recommendations including: 1) voting in 3 members from each country to attend the IPHC interim meeting, possibly funded by a user/pay system; 2) distribute a list of all conference board members, their phone numbers, and addresses; 3) possibly splitting the conference board into sport and commercial interests; and 4) mailing a copy of the annual meeting handout to all conference board members at least a week before the annual meeting, and putting the text on the internet. There was some further discussion regarding restructuring of the conference board and increased communication between the IPHC and the conference board.

Both Dr. Beamish and Mr. Pennoyer made comments regarding the severity of the budget cuts in both countries and how they may affect the Commission. Dr. Beamish noted that in future years, the Conference Board may even be called upon to contribute funds to Commission research. Dr. McCaughran added that the Commission does all its research on less than 1% the value of the fishery, thus the cost is less than other fishery organizations.

The floor was then opened to comments which included: 1) clarification of enforcement fines and where the funds end up; 2) a suggestion to charge a fee per conference board member; 3) suggestions to the Commission to ask for voluntary help from fishers and the industry for research purposes.

The conference board agreed to meet later in the day to compile a formal proposal for Conference Board restructuring.

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1995

When asked to comment on the joint session, Mr. Pennoyer commented that more feedback of minority notes would be helpful. There was discussion regarding the proposed retention of halibut

in the early sablefish fishery in the Aleutians. Main concerns regarded ramifications of such an allowance on other fisheries and other parts of the coast including Canada, such as similar allowances for other fisheries, and the impact on the directed halibut fishery.

After a lunch break, discussion continued regarding conference board proposals. The commissioners decided to allow a small contingent of the conference board to the interim and bycatch meetings, at their own expense.

The Commission agreed with the incorporation of Area 4D-N back into Area 4D.

Regarding the Bering Sea habitat allocations, Mr. Pennoyer proposed that the Commission not decide on boundary changes since IFQs and CDQs are already in place for 1995. However, the staff should work more closely with the NPFMC and other interest groups over the next year to compose a recommendation. Dr. McCaughran was asked to write a letter to the NPFMC and request that members begin to think about the issue.

Discussion ensued regarding quotas. Mr. Hoard recommended setting the Area 2B quota then setting Area 2A according to last year's ratio. Dr. Beamish supported a 9.52 million pound quota in Area 2B and stated that more surveys need to be done in the area before making assumptions about the CPUE effect. The U.S. commissioners noted that Area 2C fishers have been consistently conservative in their own area and it would be difficult to recommend a 9.52 million pound quota in Area 2B when the area has been typically overfished. There was no final proposal for Area 2A, 2B, or 2C quotas at this time.

After a short coffee break, the staff was asked to comment on the effects of phasing in the assessment projection approach as opposed to leaping the gap in just one year. Dr. Patrick Sullivan noted that the staff will continue to analyze the assessment in the coming year and that relative importance of quick action in some areas may be greater (i.e. Area 2A and 2B) than in others. IPHC management philosophy of proportional harvest requires moving toward staff recommendation. However, there is no need to make the change in one year. Therefore, harvest can be kept in the same proportion as last year while the NPFMC and the Commission work out new area allocations.

The habitat allocation method for setting quotas in Area 4 was addressed. It was concluded after further staff input that since the conservation reason for habitat allocation was not significant, quotas should be set using the same proportions as last year. However, further analysis should be done in the coming year.

Commission proposals for catch limits were as follows: Area 2A - .52, Area 2B - 9.52, Area 2C - 9.0, Area 3A - 20.0, Area 3B - 3.7 million pounds.

There was some discussion regarding opening and closing dates in both countries. No unified proposal was made at this time.

After significant discussion, it was decided to recommend that a vessel must clear into either Area 4C or 4D in Dutch Harbor or Akutan in person, but can clear out of the area with a VHF radio and visual sighting from shore at either St. George or St. Paul Islands.

The use of hook strippers, Area 2A seasons, Area 2A license requirements, the keeping of the 72-hour regulation, and putting the annual meeting handout on the internet were all approved with very little discussion. The staff was asked to work on the logbook proposal which would enable a fisher to use only one for all groundfish.

The Commission decided to write two letters to the NPFMC; 1) neither supporting nor opposing the January 1 sablefish opening proposal, but simply stating concerns which included the possible increase of effort, resulting bycatch, and market considerations; 2) regarding Ms. Kozak's proposal to review halibut retention in the hook and line groundfish fishery.

The commissioners met in closed session.

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION - THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1995

The Canadian delegation distributed a handout regarding needs for more U.S. control of halibut bycatch. Mr. Pennoyer responded by noting the expense that is already taking place to achieve this goal and reviewed the various programs already in place. Appendix II contains the draft bycatch proposals for the U.S. and Canadian governments as well as the Conference Board.

Dr. Beamish reopened the discussion regarding seasons and quotas. Mr. Pennoyer cautioned that declining stocks indicate that restraint should be used when setting quotas. He proposed that the projection method of assessment be phased in over a two year period. The quota recommendations from the previous session were reviewed for informational purposes for Areas 2 and 3.

Regarding Area 4 quotas, Mr. Pennoyer commented that the staff has not put forth a strong biological argument for boundary change and dramatic quota changes in some areas based on the habitat allocation model. He suggested informing the NPFMC of intentions to investigate further and that Area 4 quota recommendations should be as follows: Area 4A - 1.97, Area 4B - 2.29, Area 4C - .76, Area 4D - .76, Area 4E - .14 million pounds.

When considering season dates, November 15 was suggested as the closing date. Ms. Norosz noted concern over the race for fish at the opening date and that it should correspond to proper tides. After some further consideration, March 15 was suggested as the opening date.

The 1994 Interim meeting minutes were approved.

Ms. Norosz read the proposal from the Conference Board to form an industry advisory group to attend the IPHC interim meetings. The plan included: 1) an application form for accreditation; 2)

establishment of a cut-off date for proposals from industry; 3) authorization of co-chairs to set up an account and solicit voluntary fee of \$200 per member; 4) conference board representatives at interim meeting would number six U.S. and three Canadian; 5) at the annual meeting, the minutes given in the joint session would be considered a draft and the final would be presented at the end of meeting.

Dr. McCaughran was asked to draft letters regarding various proposals to the NPFMC, Governor Lowry, and the PFMC for the Chairman's signature.

In response to a question on the status of the grid sorting proposal, Dr. Trumble commented that an adhoc working group will review a new draft of the analysis during a teleconference at the end of February. The NPFMC will then review the analysis, and decide if it should be sent for public review from April to June of 1995. Mr. Pennoyer asked that Commissioners be informed via conference call of the proposal which will allow the commissioners to draft a statement to be submitted to the NPFMC.

Bycatch was again discussed and Mr. Pennoyer commented that although small decreases in U.S. halibut mortality can be achieved, there is no avenue for large, 10% reductions at this time. However, it is possible that the VIP program may make a difference with further prosecutions. Also, the amount of harvestable groundfish has increased while keeping the caps constant and that is also a step in the right direction.

Dr. Beamish commented that more pressure needs to be put on the Councils to reduce bycatch. Mr. Pennoyer assured the Commissioners that the NPFMC takes it very seriously. He then proposed increased interaction between the Commission and the NPFMC, and invited Dr. Beamish to attend the meetings. Dr. Beamish accepted the offer.

PUBLIC SESSION - THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1995

The meeting was called to order and Dr. Beamish reminded the participants that this was not a meeting for public testimony although the Commission may ask for verification on certain issues. Mr. Pennoyer acknowledged the receipt of an annual meeting proposal from Sitka, Alaska interest groups.

The following items were adopted by the Commission:

- 1) Catch limits (pounds, net weight) are as follows: Area 3A (20,000,000), Area 3B (3,700,000), Area 4A (1,950,000), Area 4B (2,310,000), Area 4C (770,000), Area 4D (770,000), and Area 4E (120,000).
- 2) Fishing periods were adopted as follows: Area 2A (four 10-hour fishing periods on 7/5, 7/18, 8/1, 8/15), Area 2A treaty indian fishery, and Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, and 4 to begin on March 15

and end on November 15.

- 3)The remainder of the Area 2A catch sharing plan including the sport fishery will be determined under NMFS regulation.
- 4)New licensing procedures for Area 2A which were initially established by the PFMC which include: 1) allowing a vessel to be licensed for only one of three fisheries including commercial, sport charter, or incidental salmon troll; 2) all commercial license applications must be postmarked by April 30 in order for a license to be issued.
- 5)Modifications in vessel clearance requirements for Area 4 which specifies that when a vessel is clearing out of either Area 4C or 4D, clearance must be made at either St. George or St. Paul Islands and can be made by VHF radio provided that visual identification of the vessel can be confirmed from shore. The same procedural requirement applies to Area 4B clearances in Nazan Bay.
- 6)All fish must be dressed prior to being offloaded from the catching vessel.
- 7)Hook strippers are legalized in all waters provided that all non-retained halibut are released using one of the careful release methods.
- 8)Area 4D-N will be merged back into Area 4D.
- 9)Retention of incidental halibut is allowed in the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A.
- 10)Interim meeting, 1995 will be held on November 28 in the Seattle offices.
- 11)Annual meeting, 1996 will be held in Seattle on January 22 to 25.
- 12)Chairman for 1995 interim meeting and 1996 annual meeting will be Steven Pennoyer.
- 13)Vice-chairman for 1995 interim meeting and 1996 annual meeting will be Richard Beamish.
- 14)Staff has authorization to make housekeeping changes to the regulations as long as intent is not changed.

Dr. Beamish commented that Canada will pursue reduction of the excessive bycatch in the U.S. at the highest levels of government. Also, in light of the ongoing problem of bycatch, the 60/40 quota split for Area 2 will no longer be waived as it has been in past years. Therefore, the recommended quota of 0.52 million pounds for Area 2A and 9.0 million pounds for Area 2C cannot be approved by the Canadian contingent.

Mr. Pennoyer responded that the issue has been elevated in the U.S. as well, but that the U.S.

cannot support a return to the 60/40 quota split. He noted that the 60/40 split would specify an 8.0 million pound quota for Areas 2C and 2A combined, which was not acceptable, especially in light of the conservatism that Area 2C fishers have shown in recommending quotas for the past few years. Therefore, the U.S. contingent cannot approve the Area 2B quota proposal of 9.52 million pounds.

The letter to the NPFMC regarding the January 1 sablefish opening in the Aleutian Islands was read by Mr. Pennoyer.

Dr. Beamish noted that the Commission would now be including conference board members in both the bycatch and interim meetings.

Mr. Best reviewed the previous day's meeting with the Conference Board which outlined interim meeting representation and the fact that new proposals would be accepted for the January meeting only.

Dr. Beamish gave some brief closing remarks and congratulated participants on keeping the halibut stocks healthy.

The meeting was adjourned.

Steven Pennoyer, Chairman

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION
SEVENTY FIRST ANNUAL MEETING, 1995
VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| Name | Agency/Org'n/Vessel | City, State/Prov. |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Barry Ackerman | DFO | Vancouver, B.C. |
| Ragnar Alstrom | Yukon Delta Fisheries | Alakanuk, AK |
| Bob Alverson | FVOA | Bothell, WA |
| Phil Anderson | WDFW | Olympia, WA |
| W. Arterburn | Pribilof Bering Sfd | St. Paul Is, AK |
| N. Baker | Tanadyusiz | Anchorage, AK |
| Jeroder Baleuunof | St. George Fish Assn. | Anchorage, AK |
| Greg Bargman | WDFW | Olympia, WA |
| Nazary Basargin | K. Bay Fisheries Assn. | Homer, Ak |
| Dean Beers | ADF&G | Juneau, AK |
| Anne Best | HAB | B.C. |
| Gregg Best | HAB | B.C. |
| Brian Bigler | HANA | Seattle, WA |
| Lia Bijsterveld | DFO | Vancouver, B.C. |
| Barbara Bingham | Sitka Charter Assn. | Sitka, AK |
| Craig Bowhay | NWIFC | Forks, WA |
| Dave Boyles | Fisher | B.C. |
| Don Bremnev | Yakutat Fisherman's Assn. | Yakutat, AK |
| Jay Brevik | DSFU | Seattle, WA |
| Jeremy Brown | Alaska Troller Assn. | Juneau, AK |
| John Bruce | DSFU | Seattle, WA |
| Larry Cambronero | Kake Fisheries | Kake, AK |
| Dennis Carlssen | Kake Tribal Council | Kake, AK |
| Forrest Caruky | NMFS Enforcement | Seattle, WA |
| Billy Charles | YDFDA | Emmonak, AK |
| Greg Clapp | Arch. Marine Research | Victoria, B.C. |
| Larry Cobb | Deep Creek Charter Assn. | Ninilchik, AK |
| Neal Coenen | Oregon Fish & Wildlife | Newport, OR |
| Norman Cohen | CVFC | Juneau, AK |
| Eileen Cooney | NOAA/General Counsel | Seattle, WA |
| Jerry Dahl Jr. | SE Fisherman Coalition | Petersburg, AK |
| Peter DeGreef | PCFVOG | B.C. |
| Nick Delaney | KLVOA | Kodiak, AK |
| Jane DiCosimo | North Pacific Council | Anchorage, AK |
| Luger Dochtermann | F/V North Point | Kodiak, AK |

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| Robert Dolan | SE Fisherman's Coalition | Juneau, AK |
| Hubert Doolan | Neg'a Tribal Council | Kake, AK |
| Jill Droer | self | QCC, B.C. |
| George Durk | Atka Fisher | Atka, AK |
| Arne Einmo | FVOA | Bellevue, WA |
| Ken Erikson | PCFVOG | B.C. |
| Penelope Fields | NMFS Enforcement | Seattle, WA |
| Rick Flynn | U.S. Coast Guard | Seattle, WA |
| Bert Foulds | DFO | Ottawa, ONT |
| Kelly Francis | DFO - Communications | Nanaimo, B.C. |
| Alexander Galanin | CBSFA | B.C. |
| John Garner | NorQuest Seafoods | Seattle, WA |
| John Gibson | Fisherman Assn | Courtenay, B.C. |
| Edwin Glotfelty | Yukon Delta Fisheries | Seward, AK |
| Art Goddard | Canadian Consulate | Seattle, WA |
| Ken Green | DFO | Prince Rupert, B.C. |
| Tony Gregorio | Lake and Penn Burchet | Chignik Lagoon, AK |
| Paul Gronholdt | Penninsula Marketing | Sand Point, AK |
| Shari Gross | HANA | Seattle, WA |
| Terry Guernes | DFO | Nanaimo, B.C. |
| Peter Haugen | Co-op Fisherman's Guild | Prince Rupert, B.C. |
| Terry Henshaw | Annieville Halibut Assn. | Delta, B.C. |
| Don Henson | Annieville Halibut Assn. | Surrey, B.C. |
| Dennis Hicks | ALFA | Sitka, AK |
| Bill Hines | NMFS | Juneau, AK |
| David Hoga | U.S. Dept. of State | Washington, D.C. |
| David Hogan | U.S. Dept. of State | Washington D.C. |
| Walt Hunnings | Lt. Cmdr - USCG D17 | Juneau, Ak |
| Lorne Iverson | United Fisherman & Allied | Vancouver, B.C. |
| Gordon Jackson | Kake Tribal Corp. | Juneau, AK |
| Samuel Jackson | Kake VOA | B.C. |
| Ken Jenkins | SFAB Charter Boat | Port Hardy, B.C. |
| Gordon Jensen | Petersburg VOA | Petersburg, AK |
| Terry Jernes | DFO | Nanaimo, B.C. |
| Steve Joner | Makah Tribe | Neah Bay, WA |
| dilbert Kadak | Kake VOA | Kake, AK |
| Henrick Kadakesr | Kake tribe | Kake, AK |
| Dave Keeling | PCFVOG | B.C. |
| Bill Kelliher | Kelliher Fish Co. | Edmonds, WA |
| Robert Knowles | DSFU | Seattle, WA |
| Joyce Knutsen | FVOA | Seattle, WA |
| Pete Knutsen | FVOA | Seattle, WA |
| Linda Kozak | KLVOA | Kodiak, AK |

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| Earl Krygier | ADF&G | Juneau, AK |
| Joe Kyle | APICDA | Juneau, AK |
| Lloyd Larsen | F/V Valorous | Bothell, WA |
| Bruce Leaman | DFO | Nanaimo, B.C. |
| Lou Leberti | Bay Area Chamber of Commerce | Coos Bay, OR |
| Arne Lee | FVOA | Poulsbo, WA |
| Phillip Lesteukof | CBSFA | St. Paul Is, AK |
| Loh-Lee Low | AFSC, NMFS | Seattle, WA |
| Macarius Mandregan | CBSFA | Prince Rupert, B.C. |
| Hubert Markishtom | Makah Tribe | Neah Bay, WA |
| Nikula Martushte | KBFA | Homer, AK |
| Kim Mauriks | Pacific Troller Assn. | B.C. |
| Bill McCutcheon | Rainier Cold Storage | Seattle, WA |
| John McGruder | Dept. of State | washington, D.C. |
| W. McKone | PICES | Sidney, B.C. |
| Gordon McLean | French Creek Sfd | Parksville, B.C. |
| Gaile McQuarrie | Ketchikan Marine Charter | Ketchikan, AK |
| Larry McQuarrie | AK Fed. Sport Services | Ketchikan, AK |
| Steve Meadows | Quileute Tribe | LaPush, WA |
| Anthony Merculief | St. George Fisher | St. George Is, AK |
| C. Merculief | St. George Fish Assn. | St. George Is, AK |
| Carl Merculief | CBSFA | St. Paul Is, AK |
| Scott Meyer | ADF&G-Sport Fish Division | Anchorage, AK |
| Steve Meyer | NMFS Enforcement | Juneau, AK |
| David Morris | Ju-Ju-T | B.C. |
| Herbert Morven | Nisga'a Tribal Council | New Auponsh, B.C. |
| Norm Nor | UFAWU | Parksville, B.C. |
| Jacob Nyce | NNFC | St. Paul Is, AK |
| Joe Ockenfels | Port of Garibaldi | Garibabldi, OR |
| Per Odegaard | FVOA | Edmonds, WA |
| Eric Olsen | FVOA | Seattle, WA |
| Marc Pakenham | Canadian Coast Guard | Victoria, B.C. |
| Jeff Passer | NMFS Enforcement | Juneau, AK |
| Dennis Petre | Valdez Charter Boat Assn. | Valdez, AK |
| Anthony Philemonoff | CBSFA | St. Paul Is, AK |
| James Phillips | F/V Nancy K | Pelican, AK |
| Patricia Phillips | F/V Dragonfly | Pelican, AK |
| Rad Pierce | PRVOA | B.C. |
| Perfenia Pletnikoff | CBSFA | St. Paul Is, AK |
| Jon Pollard | NOAA | Juneau, AK |
| Michael Quinn | Kake Tribal Corp. | Kake, AK |
| Joyce Quintal-McGrath | DFO | Ottawa |
| Brent Richardson | Inlet Salmon | Kenai, AK |

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| Mike Roberts | Rainier Cold Storage | Seattle, WA |
| Ken Roeske | DFO | Ottawa, Ont. |
| Aaron Sarna | DFO | Ottaw, Ont. |
| Robert Schell | Seafood Prod. Co-op | Sitka, AK |
| Joe Scordino | NMFS | Seattle, WA |
| John Secord | FVOA of B.C. | Vancouver, B.C. |
| John Sevier | Alaska Pacific Sfds. | Kodiak, AK |
| Ralph Shaw | SFAB Rec. Fishery | Courtenay, B.C. |
| Irina Shestakova | NPAFC - Exec Dir. | Vancouver, B.C. |
| Phil Smith | NMFS - RAM division | Juneau, AK |
| Simeon Swetozof Jr. | F/V Wind Dancer | St. Paul Island, AK |
| David Taylor | DSFU | Seattle, WA |
| Ernie Taylor | UFAWU | Richmond, B.C. |
| Peter Toften | BC Packers Ltd | Steveston, B.C. |
| Warren Toolie | NIISA Fisherman's Assn. | Savoonga, AK |
| Dick Tremaine | CBSFA/E3 Consulting | Anchorage, Ak |
| Peter Udelhoven | Homer Charter Assn. | Homer, AK |
| Doug Vincent-Lang | ADF&G-Sport Fish Division | Anchorage, AK |
| John Vostinak | Depoe Bay Charter Assn. | Depoe By, OR |
| Roz Vostinak | Oregon Coast Charter Assn. | Newport, OR |
| Robert Ward | Homer Charter Assn. | Homer, AK |
| Brian Warmuth | Ketchikan Trollers Comm | Ketchikan, AK |
| Frank Warrens | PFMC | Portland, OR |
| Stanley Weikal | F/V Hombre | Anacortes, WA |
| Dona Wells | Dock Street Brokers | Seattle, WA |
| Richard Whittaker | Kake Tribal Corp. | Ketchikan, AK |
| John Wilks | North Pacific Halibut Assn. | Qualicum Beach |
| Gary Williamson | Black Cod Assn. | Vancouver, B.C. |
| Elisabeth Wipfli | MAFF - Sfd Planning | Victoria, B.C. |
| Richard Zacharof | Tribal Counsel | St. Paul Is, AK |
| Alex Zaochney | Atka Pride | Atka, AK |
| Jon Zuck | NSEDC | Anchorage, AK |

APPENDIX I - CONFERENCE BOARD MINUTES

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

CONFERENCE BOARD MINUTES

OF THE

SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

Victoria, British Columbia

January 23-26, 1995

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

CONFERENCE BOARD MINUTES

OF THE

SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

Victoria, British Columbia

Gregg Best, Canadian
Robert Alverson, U.S. Chairman

ORGANIZATIONS PRESENT

CANADA

Annieville Halibut Association
Fishing Vessel Owners Association of BC
Native Brotherhood of BC
North Pacific Halibut Fisherman's Association
Northern Native Fishing Corporation
Pacific Coast Fishing Vessels Owners Guild
Pacific Trollers Association
Pacific Coast Blackcod Association
Prince Rupert Co-op Fishermen's Guild
Prince Rupert Vessel Owners Association
Sport Fishing Advisory Board
Sport Fishing Advisory Board - Charter Section
United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union

UNITED STATES

Alaska Trollers Association
Alaska Draggers Association
Alaska Federation of Sport Fishing Services
Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association
Atka Fishermen's Association
Bering Sea Fishermen's Association
Coastal Villages Fishing Cooperative
Deep Creek Charter Boat Association
Depoe Bay Charter Boat Association
Homer Charter Association
Kachemak Bay Fisheries Association

Kake Tribal Corporation
Ketchikan Marine Charters
Ketchikan Trollers Committee
Kodiak Longline Vessel Owners Association
Lake and Peninsula Borough
Metlakatla Indian Community
North Pacific Fishing Association
Norton Sound Economic Development Corp
Oregon Coast Charter Boat Association
Pacific Fixed Gear Association
Peninsula Marketing Association
Petersburg Charter Boat Association
Petersburg Vessel Owners
Recreational Fishing Coalition
Seafood Producers Coop
Seattle Deep Sea Fishermen's Union
Seattle Fishing Vessel Owners Association
Sitka Charter Boat Association
Southeast Alaska Coalition
St. George Fishermen's Association
St. Paul Fishermen's Association
United Fishermen's Marketing Association
Valdez Charter Boat Association
Yakutat Fishermen's Association
Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association
Washington State Charter Boat Association

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION
1995 ANNUAL MEETING OF CONFERENCE BOARD

REVIEW CONFERENCE BOARD VOTING ROSTER AND APPROVE ANY NEW
REPRESENTATIVES

The Conference Board has requested that the Canadian and United States chair develop guidelines for submitting applications for approval to become members of the Conference Board and have authorized the chairs to appoint a subcommittee to address this issue.

REVIEW AREAS

The Conference Board with exception to the staff recommendation with regard to Area 4 has no changes to recommend in the Convention areas.

Area 4

The Conference Board unanimously supports the staff recommendation, which is also under Item G. 3, which would incorporate 4D-N into Area 4D.

The United States Conference Board deliberated the issue of incorporating Areas 4D, 4C, and 4E into one area. The Conference Board took action on two motions, the first of which advises the Commission not to change the areas that currently exist. The second motion dealt with providing adequate timing before any changes are made by the Commission so that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) can address the allocative regime under their IFQ and CDQ programs in these respective areas. There was a suggestion to give a one-year notice to the NPFMC to address this issue, however, the United States Conference Board did not feel this was adequate time. In any event, before the Commission aggregates Areas 4D, 4C, and 4E, the NPFMC needs to have adequate notice so that the elaborate allocative structure in these areas can be addressed.

REVIEW QUOTAS

Area 2A

The Conference Board recommends 520,000 pounds.

This recommendation to the Commission is based on Table 1. 1994 Assessment of Yield -Rate = .30 (based on projected 1995 exploitable biomass). This is consistent with the new philosophy that the Commission staff is using for new area quotas. Additionally, the Conference Board supports this quota because it is consistent with the 95/5% division between Areas 2B and 2A.

Area 2B

The Canadian Conference Board recommends 9.52 million pounds on a vote of 11 to 1.

The Conference Board supports this quota because it is consistent with the recommendation that is generated on Table 1. 1994 Assessment of Yield - Rate = .30 (based on projected 1995 exploitable biomass). This new procedure for developing quotas more accurately reflects what the Canadian fishermen were experiencing with their CPUE rates which were discounted when the staff developed their recommendations. The Conference Board feels the need for scientific consistency and if the staff and Commission are going to use the new procedure for developing quotas they should feel comfortable enough to accept the result. The fishermen do not believe that the CPUE should be discounted until a survey can confirm the concerns of the staff. The CPUE data now available in Area 2B is the best information available and provides CPUE information over eight consecutive months. The Canadian Conference Board also believes that a constant exploitation rate should be applied to all regulatory areas.

Area 2C

The Conference Board recommends a quota of 9 million pounds.

The Conference Board recommends this quota because the staff recommendation is less than either the projected Area 2C quota in Table 1 for stock assessment based on projected 1995 exploitable biomass or that based on the 1994 exploitable biomass. The 9 million pound quota seemed adequately conservative based on the two procedures for developing quotas and represents a 2 million pound reduction from 1994. The Area 2C quota has been consistently set below the staff's recommendations for the last three years. The bycatch in this area is also the lowest of all areas in Convention waters. The United States Conference Board also is convinced that there will be additional savings from wastage with the United States IFQ program.

The Conference Board took three different votes to recommend this quota to the Commission. The final vote was 15 in favor and 12 opposed. The 12 in opposition support a harvest of 8.5 million pounds.

Area 3A

The Conference Board recommends a quota of 20 million pounds, which is the staff recommendation.

Area 3B

The Conference Board recommends the staff recommendation of 3.7 million pounds. The United States Conference Board voted 17 in favor to 6 opposed to support this recommendation.

Those in opposition support a 5 million pound harvest based on habitat area and the highest CPUE of any area and a very low bycatch mortality which occurs in Area 3B. There has been very little survey work done in this area and, hence, some of the Conference Board believe the Commission staff have under-estimated the harvest strength in this area.

Area 4

The Conference Board recommends a total harvest of 6.2 million pounds in Area 4.

The recommendations by subarea are as follows:

Area 4A

The Conference Board supports the staff recommendation of 2 million pounds.

Area 4B

The Conference Board recommends a harvest of 2 million pounds.

Area 4B must be considered a distinct habitat range from Areas 4A, 4C, 4D, and 4E. The Aleutian Chain has many areas that have been inaccessible to the fleet because of the nature of the openings for the last fifteen years. Many of the areas west of 170°W. have not been fished. The westward area of Area 4B has not been fished because of its distance from the clearing ports. It is estimated the last 300 miles of Area 4B has not been harvested in the last seven to eight years. There are many areas which are not considered in the staff's habitat area because fishing gear was not deployed in those areas. Many of those areas are between the islands where there are strong currents and gear cannot be deployed. Nevertheless, those areas are prime habitat for many species including halibut. Area 4B is unique in that it has two continental shelves which provide significant habitat much of which has not been exploited in many years. The IFQ program should allow vessels to prospect and find additional fishing opportunities.

Areas 4C and 4D

The Conference Board recommends a quota of 800,000 pounds in Area 4C and 1,200,000 pounds in Area 4D.

The Conference Board considered a couple of harvesting strategies using the Commission staff's recommendation of a total harvest between Areas 4C and 4D of 2 million pounds. The Conference Board considered a harvest of 1,300,000 pounds in Area 4D and 700,000 pounds in Area 4C which was amended to 1 million pounds in each area and later refined to the current recommendation which was supported by 17 and opposed by 7.

Those representatives from Area 4C felt that since Areas 4D and 4C have had similar

quotas in the past that this should continue and that this type of parity was appropriate in determining the harvest levels between these two areas. Those that are dependent upon Area 4D recognize that significant changes in Area 4C will affect the NPFMC allocation strategies in that area and initially supported 1,300,000 pounds in Area 4D and 700,000 pounds in Area 4C. Area 4D has had recommendations from the Conference Board the last two years recommending a harvest level in the range of 1.3 million pounds because of the larger habitat area of Area 4D.

The Conference Board acknowledges in Area 4C the CPUE over the last several years has been based on seasons that were designed to conflict with Area 3 fishermen rather than the optimal time for this area, which would be mid-July to mid-August. The CPUE data would in all likelihood reflect a higher number had seasons been available at this time.

Area 4E

The Conference Board recommends a quota of 200,000 pounds .

The Conference Board recommendation is 100,000 pounds less than the staff recommendations and reflects a harvest which would be 80,000 pounds greater than the 120,000 pounds taken in 1994. This should be adequate expansion for fishing opportunities in 1995.

SEASON DATE RECOMMENDATION FOR ALL AREAS

Area 2A

The Conference Board supports the staff recommendation in the Blue Book starting with July 5.

The Conference Board recommends to the Commission an opening date of March 1 and a closing date of November 15.

This recommendation is based on separate votes taken by the Canadian Conference Board and the United States Conference Board. The Canadian Conference Board supports this recommendation on a vote of 11 to 1. The United States Conference Board supports this recommendation on a vote of 14 in favor to 11 in opposition with 6 abstentions.

The Conference Board had a general discussion on season lengths including a 12-month season to take advantage of market opportunities. The following actions by the Conference Board were taken on this agenda item:

The United States Conference Board initially supported an opening date of March 15 and a closing date of November 15 on a vote of 20 to 6. The United States vote on these dates preceded the Canadian vote and there may have been some misunderstanding because some of the United States industry representatives thought the Canadian industry was supportive of March 15 based on

the lack of opposition in the general discussion. The Canadian Conference Board unanimously voted in opposition to the March 15 opening date and November 15 closing date.

Support for a March 1 date from the Canadian and United States Conference Board is based on having maximum access to markets. Additionally, there was some concern by the United States harvesters that an April 1 date may invite too large of a fleet because of better weather conditions and exacerbate the bycatch of halibut in the longline black cod fishery in Alaska. It was believed that a March 1 date would not result in a rush to the grounds whereas an April 1 date would. An earlier date should result in a lower bycatch mortality because vessels will be retaining their halibut in all hook and line fisheries in Alaska. It was pointed out that with an IFQ/IVQ program vessel owners can choose the optimum time to fish both in terms of weather and market.

Those in opposition cited the Halibut Commission staff's concerns for migration between Areas 2C and 2B, and between Areas 2B and 2A. Sports interest in the Area 2A region were concerned about the affects of a March 1 opening and a March 15 opening in Area 2B because they believed this would limit the amount of migrating fish available to them. Additionally, smaller vessels would probably not participate in a March 1 opening due to weather considerations.

There was some suggestion that the opening date should be based on a tidal date rather than a calendar date to minimize gear loss. There was not much support for this nor debate. The Conference Board also discussed an opening scenario where the southern part of Area 2C open April 1 and the southern part of Area 2B open April 1 as well, to protect the migrating stocks, and all other areas would be open March 1. This was not acceptable in the United States to have a split opening. There was also some discussion on limiting the amount of harvest in March but this did not seem to be workable at this time.

The Conference Board unanimously supports that the Commission aggressively pursuing tagging studies, as soon as possible, on migratory stocks between Areas 2C and 2B and between Areas 2B and 2A.

AREA 2A MANAGEMENT

It was the understanding of the Conference Board that these issues had been acted on by the United States Government and did not need action.

STAFF REGULATORY PROPOSALS

Hook strippers

The Conference Board unanimously supports legalizing the use of automated hook strippers as outlined on page 63 in the Blue Book.

The Conference Board additionally adopted recommendation to broaden the regulation requiring careful release to include all halibut that are not retained, which is outlined on page 63 of the Blue Book.

Clearance requirements in 4A and 4B

Area 4B - Provide for physical clearance in Nazon Bay and allow for VHF radio clearance on the way out.

Areas 4C and 4D - Allow for physical clearance in existing ports such as Dutch Harbor and Akutan and VHF radio clearance in the Pribilofs.

VHF radio clearance should ensure that the vessel is within 20 miles of the port it is clearing.

The Conference Board unanimously supports existing requirements where residents of Area 4 who have not participated in fisheries outside Area 4 would not be required to clear.

Eliminate Area 4D-N

This was addressed in the area issues above. The area is not actually eliminated, but is re-incorporated in Area 4D.

Minor word changes in Regulations

The Conference Board took no action on this.

Mandatory office logbooks in 1996

The United States Conference Board members request that the staff work with members of the industry. The industry would like to have one logbook as the IFQ program in Alaska will allow fishermen to harvest both groundfish and halibut and we prefer having one logbook such as the federal logbook or a modified halibut logbook, which is acceptable to National Marine Fisheries Service.

All fish must be dressed before landing

The Conference Board unanimously supported this action.

INDUSTRY PROPOSALS

Northern Native Fishing Corporation, Prince Rupert, BC

No action taken.

Alaska Sablefish Inc., Homer

The Conference Board supported the request by Alaska Sablefish Inc. to endorse an Aleutian-only January 1 opening date for black cod in 1996.

Matt Langdon, commercial fisherman, Castle Rock, WA

No action taken.

Alaskan commercial fisherman

No action taken.

Sqeean Stau Do Tien, Southeast Alaska

No action taken.

North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK

These issues were addressed above.

OTHER ISSUES

72-hour prohibition - The Conference Board failed to take this issue up, but the two chairmen note that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council approved a motion to recommend to the IPHC that the 72 hour prohibition continue, and that it would apply to vessels who intend to participate in directed sablefish and halibut fisheries.

The Conference Board requests that the Commission provide dialogue with those Conference Board representatives that can attend July and November meetings to expedite the regulatory process that affects industry.

The Conference Board requests that the Blue Book and the industry proposals be made available to the Conference Board members one week prior to the annual meeting. This would assist in the Conference Board's deliberation.

The Conference Board received a late proposal and without prejudice either for or against requests the following concept be looked at by the IPHC staff in light of enforcement and bycatch implications:

"Beginning January 1, 1996, non-halibut and black cod directed fisheries using hook-and-line gear be allowed to retain halibut up to historical bycatch rates for each fishery. That halibut would be deducted from the vessel's IFQ."

NEW BUSINESS

ACCREDITATION

The Conference Board discussed the current Accreditation Application Form and recommends the following changes:

- 1.The application need not have all the member's names. The total number would be sufficient.
- 2.It should be made clear to those submitting an application that the Conference Board membership is based on the representation of harvesters and that government agencies such as port commissions and chambers of commerce would not qualify for membership. The application needs to be submitted by a group that can verify that it is involved in representing a group of harvesters. There can be some exceptions due to the nature of the remoteness of areas in Alaska and the style of representation that has developed in this area.
- 3.For those members of the Conference Board that were not represented in a prior year, they will need to indicate their intent to participate by December 1 the following year in order to be accredited.
- 4.Those organizations that are seeking to be a member for the first time need to have their application in by December 1.
- 5.All applications should be mailed to the International Pacific Halibut Commission, P.O. Box 95009, Seattle, WA 98145-2009.

INDUSTRY PROPOSALS

The Conference Board recommends that December 1 be used as a cut-off time for the submission of industry proposals to the Conference Board and IPHC for consideration at the January Annual Meeting. The purpose of this would be to provide adequate time for the IPHC staff to distribute proposals along with the Blue Book to the Conference Board representative.

FEES

The Conference Board has authorized the co-chairs to set up a joint account and solicit the existing Conference Board members for a voluntary \$200 fee which would be used to distribute information developed at the July and November interim IPHC meetings in 1995. Funds would not be used to cover traveling expenses during 1995.

INTERIM MEETING REPRESENTATION

The Canadian Conference Board has chosen Ralph Shaw, Gregg Best, and Rod Pierce to represent the Conference Board at any interim 1995 meetings of the IPHC. The United States Conference Board has selected Gorden Jensen, Linda Kozak, Bob Alverson, Stan Weikle, and there will be a representative authorized from Area 4, a representative from the Sport Industry, and a representative from the Kenai-Homer area.

It is not contemplated that new proposals other than those actions taken at the January annual meeting would be authorized to be spoken to by the delegates at the interim meeting. New proposals will be only considered for the January annual meeting.

RECREATIONAL COMMENTS

The sport charter representatives fielded a lively discussion of future allocation issues between the different user groups. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is currently addressing several alternatives to allocate between commercial and charter boat operations. The discussion included the increasing participation of charter boat operators in the Alaska area as well as a discussion on capping the growth to some percentage of the overall quota.

MINUTES

The Conference Board decided that minutes would henceforth be considered a DRAFT until minor corrections can be made by Conference Board members so that an accurate set of minutes can be created.

The Conference Board adjourned the meeting and thanked the chairs.

Gregg Best, Canadian Chairman
Robert Alverson, United States Chairman

**APPENDIX II - BYCATCH STATEMENTS FROM THE U.S., CANADA,
AND CONFERENCE BOARD**

1995 DRAFT UNITED STATES BYCATCH POLICY RESOLUTION

The Commission,

RECALLING its July 22, 1991 recommendations of the Special Bycatch Meeting of the International Pacific Halibut Commission for the Parties to reduce halibut bycatch mortality;

RECOGNIZING the efforts of both countries to reduce bycatch while preserving each country's ability to harvest its groundfish resources;

RECOGNIZING that no solution has been found by either country to address the bycatch issue;

NOTING that the United States has taken extraordinary conservation and management measures to minimize halibut bycatch through such management actions as:

- implementing an extensive industry funded observer program;
- disseminating information on halibut catch rates to the fleet;
- directly reducing groundfish catch quotas;
- requiring a detailed record-keeping and reporting program;
- establishing halibut bycatch limits;
- implementing gear restrictions;
- establishing time/area closures for groundfish fisheries;
- implementing vessel incentive program;
- implementing mandatory careful release measures for incidentally caught halibut;
- cooperating on industry initiatives to address bycatch;
- closing down numerous fisheries when bycatch caps have been reached; thus foregoing groundfish economic opportunities; and
- implementing a sablefish and halibut Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program beginning in 1995;

NOTING that if groundfish resources were fully harvested, bycatch and bycatch rates would have been much higher without these bycatch management measures. While bycatch was reduced during 1991-1993 through various measures, it increased in 1994 due to difficulties in managing high pressure fisheries over 1993. Since 1994, management regimes have been adopted to reduce bycatch mortalities to levels that would approximate those of 1993;

NOTING also that the foregone revenue of groundfish that could have been harvested, if not for bycatch management measures, has reached \$80 million in some years;

RECOGNIZING that long-term solutions to bycatch reduction are not yet realized despite the

numerous conservation and management measures which have been implemented.

OBSERVING with approval that the U.S. Congress is currently amending the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act which may include such bycatch reduction measures as:

- establishing a system of fees to provide an incentive to reduce bycatch;
- allocating preference to fishing and processing practices within each gear group that result in the lowest levels of discards;
- requiring full retention, to the maximum extent practicable, by fishing vessels and full utilization by processors;
- establishing a system of fines, caps, or other incentives to reduce the incidental harvest of regulatory discards; and
- requiring 100 percent observer coverage on all fishing vessels which can safely accommodate an observer and at all fish processing plants;

RECOGNIZING that the Government of Canada has initiated bycatch reduction regimes in the prosecution of its fisheries;

NOTING that the forecasts of halibut abundance through the end of the decade indicate a continuing decline in stock biomass, coupled with a sharp decline in recruitment that make bycatch reduction an even more important issue;

NOTING that while methodologies to reduce bycatch while harvesting groundfish at optimum yield may be available, the legal and programmatic bases may not be;

NOTING that bycatch reduction programs take time to implement;

RECOMMENDS that the Commission convene a special meeting in 1995 to:

1. review the status of bycatch reduction programs and opportunities based on recent legislation,
2. review formulas used to compensate for bycatch losses for appropriateness relative to areas where bycatch actually occurs in, and
3. further develop bycatch reduction programs.

1995 DRAFT CANADIAN BYCATCH POLICY RESOLUTION

The Commission,

Recalling its 1991 recommendation on halibut bycatches which was adopted by the Governments of Canada and the United States, whereby the United States committed to reduce its bycatch mortality by 25% to the end of 1993 and by 10% annually thereafter;

Acknowledging with satisfaction that the Parties undertook serious efforts in this regard such that meaningful reductions in bycatch mortality were achieved by the end of 1993;

Noting with disappointment, however, that the United States was in default of its international obligations for 1994 by failing to meet the 10% reduction in halibut mortality within its waters;

Noting further that the Congress of the United States of America is expected to reauthorize the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act this year under the Sustainable Fisheries Act to include mandatory bycatch reduction programs, with specific timetables, in all U.S. fishery management plans;

Recognizing the alarming state of halibut recruitment, which is at an all time low, and the fact that U.S. bycatches result in a penalty to Canada of approximately 2.8 million pounds of halibut that would be caught normally by Canadian fishermen;

Recommends the following;

- a) that the Government of the United States reaffirm its commitment to the Commission's 1991 recommendations requiring annual bycatch reductions of 10%;
- b) that for 1995 the U.S. bycatch reduction be 20% to compensate for the failure to meet its reduction commitment for 1994;
- c) that the United States compensate Canada for the loss it incurred as a result of U.S. bycatches in 1994; and
- d) that the Parties agree to convene a special meeting of the Commission, in April 1995, to develop and adopt a new formula to compensate the halibut biomass for bycatch losses by penalizing fisheries in those regulatory areas where the actual bycatch occurred, beginning in 1996.

1995 DRAFT CONFERENCE BOARD BYCATCH POLICY RESOLUTION

Recommended Bycatch Statement to Both Governments

Two thirds of all fish caught in the world are thrown back dead. The number of halibut killed in U.S. commercial ground fish fisheries in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska exceeds the total catch of North Pacific Halibut in all convention waters. We believe that less destructive fishing methods must be implemented immediately to curb this wanton and irresponsible destruction of fishery resources and habitat.

The North Pacific halibut resource belongs to both Canada and the U.S. Yet, according to IPHC Scientific Report No. 78 bycatch mortality has increased from a low of 7 million pounds in the mid 1980s to more than 14 million pounds in 1994. This is due entirely to U.S. directed fisheries for groundfish. Both Canadian and United States harvesters subsidize 100% of this bycatch with an annual pound for pound reduction in their traditional halibut fishery. This is unacceptable.

The U.S. trawl fishery must be moved out of critical nursery and other sensitive areas as quickly as possible to avoid the potential collapse of the North Pacific halibut fishery. In addition, the failure of the U.S. to meet its commitment to reduce bycatch mortality of halibut in directed fisheries for groundfish must be addressed. Failure to do so within six months (as indicated by obvious reductions in bycatch mortality levels) should result in penalties for individual offenders. The Conference Board recommends that the IPHC support efforts to amend the Magnuson Act in order to implement such penalties.

The Canadian government has exceeded its commitment to the trawl bycatch reduction program. We demand that the U.S. government do the same.

The Conference Board strongly recommends that the Commission convey this statement to the governments of the United States and Canada.