



Report of the 88th Session of the IPHC Conference Board (CB088)

Portland, Oregon, United States of America, 22-23 January 2018

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IPHC 2018. Report of the 88th Session of the IPHC Conference Board. Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., 23-24 January 2018.
IPHC-2018-CB088-R, 20 pp.



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ACRONYMS

CB	Conference Board
FCEY	Fishery Constant Exploitation Yield
IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission
SPR	Spawning Potential Ratio
TCEY	Total Constant Exploitation Yield

HOW TO INTERPRET TERMINOLOGY CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT

This Report has been written using the following terms and associated definitions so as to remove ambiguity surrounding how particular paragraphs should be interpreted.

- Level 1:** **RECOMMENDED; RECOMMENDATION** (formal); **REQUESTED** (informal): A conclusion for an action to be undertaken, by a Contracting Party, a subsidiary (advisory) body of the Commission and/or the IPHC Secretariat.
- Level 2:** **AGREED:** Any point of discussion from a meeting which the Commission considers to be an agreed course of action covered by its mandate, which has not already been dealt with under Level 1 above; a general point of agreement among delegations/participants of a meeting which does not need to be elevated in the Commission's reporting structure.
- Level 3:** **NOTED/NOTING; CONSIDERED; URGED; ACKNOWLEDGED:** General terms to be used for consistency. Any point of discussion from a meeting which the Commission considers to be important enough to record in a meeting report for future reference. Any other term may be used to highlight to the reader of an IPHC report, the importance of the relevant paragraph. Other terms may be used but will be considered for explanatory/informational purposes only and shall have no higher rating within the reporting terminology hierarchy than Level 3.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 88th Session of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Conference Board (CB088) was held in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. from 23-24 January 2018. A total of 78 members attended the Session from the two (2) Contracting Parties. The USA section accredited three new members for participation for the 2018 Conference Board proceedings. The meeting was opened by Mr Jeff Kaufman (U.S.A.) (Co-Chairperson), who welcomed participants to Portland.

The following are a subset of the complete recommendations and requests for action from the CB088, which are provided at [Appendix IV](#).

Fishing periods: season opening and closing dates

CB088-Rec.01 ([para. 14](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** the following fishing period dates for the commercial fishery:

- a) Opening: 10 March 2018
- b) Closing: no earlier than 7 November, with emphasis on longest season possible.

Catch limits

CB088-Rec.02 ([para. 31](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** the following TCEY catch limits for the 2018 fishing period as provided in [Table 1](#), which translate to the mortality estimates by sector (as provided by the IPHC Secretariat) provided in [Appendix III](#).

Table 1. Conference Board (CB) recommended TCEY catch limits for 2018

IPHC Regulatory Area	Catch limit (TCEY) (Mlbs)	Votes
2A	1.47	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
2B	7.25	Canada: In favour 31, Against 0 USA: In favour 0, Against 44, 3 Abstained
2C	6.58	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
3A	12.66	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
3B	3.51	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4A	1.76	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4B	1.30	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4CDE	3.69	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
Total (IPHC Convention Area)	38.22	

Minimum Size Limit

CB088-Rec.11 ([para. 65](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** to take no further action on the MSL matter, and that IPHC Secretariat actions were satisfactory. Motion passed by hand vote.

1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The 88th Session of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Conference Board (CB088) was held in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. from 23-24 January 2018. A total of 78 members attended the Session from the two (2) Contracting Parties. The USA section accredited three new members for participation for the 2018 Conference Board proceedings. The list of participants is provided at [Appendix I](#). The meeting was opened by Mr Jeff Kaufman (U.S.A.) (Co-Chairperson), who welcomed participants to Portland.
2. In accordance with Appendix IV, Section III of the IPHC Rules of Procedure (2017), the CB **NOTED** the requirement to elect Co-Chairpersons, and the option to elect up to two (2) Vice-Chairpersons, of the CB until the beginning of the next Session in 2019.
3. The CB **CALLED** for nominations for the positions of Co-Chairpersons of the CB until the opening of the next session in 2019. Mr Martin Paish (Canada) and Mr Jeff Kauffman (United States of America) were nominated, seconded and elected as Co-Chairpersons.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

4. The CB **ADOPTED** the Agenda as provided at [Appendix II](#). The documents provided to the CB088 are those submitted for the 94th Session of the Annual Meeting. Additional presentations were requested from the IPHC Secretariat on the Management Strategy Evaluation matrix of goals and objectives. A proposal to alter the agenda so that the bycatch presentation took place before discussion of catch limits was moved and passed unopposed.

3. BYCATCH

5. The CB **NOTED** the presentation by the Amendment 80 Group detailing their Bycatch Avoidance measures, including the most recent results of the Experimental Fishing Permit on deck sorting.
6. The CB **NOTED** there was remaining uncertainty as to potential bycatch reduction measures by the Amendment 80 (A-80) Fleet. The CB asked clarifying questions as to the makeup of the fleet, the permitting process of the deck sorting program and changes in the size composition of bycatch. Several Canadian CB members inquired about the mortality rates of the different sorting processes. A 4CDE member asked the A-80 fleet to reduce 026" bycatch by and an additional 170,000 in 2018 to support a 10% reduction rather than the 20% reduction from 2017's approved TCEY.

4. IPHC SECRETARIAT INFORMATIONAL SESSION

7. The CB **NOTED** the presentation by the IPHC Secretariat on the use of TCEY verses FCEY regarding 2018 catch rates. The CB inquired on processes to streamline the distribution and prevent duplicative requests of various TCEY scenarios, presented to the CB for decision making. Some discussion on area-specific bycatch distribution was held.

5. FISHING PERIODS: SEASON OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

8. The CB **NOTED** regulatory proposal IPHC-2018-AM094-PropA2 which proposed establishing fixed fishing periods for the commercial Pacific halibut fisheries.
9. The CB **AGREED** that, for both opening and closing, the dates should emphasize the longest fishing period possible for stakeholders. The following reasons were given for this rationale:
 - a) Maximize time to catch quota
 - b) Better for the consumer
 - c) Longer season for Alaskan sablefish fishers to avoid whale depredation (due to aligned sablefish and halibut season dates)
10. The CB **NOTED** that by show of hands, unanimous vote in opposition of fixed opening and closing dates, **NOTING** that the proposed fixed opening and closing dates result in a shorter season that achieved in 2017.

11. The CB **NOTED** that several opening and closing dates were discussed and debated. Several CB members expressed concern regarding the time the IPHC Secretariat seemed to require to implement the fishery. After discussion of tides and other seasonal implications, Motion put forward for a March 10th opening date for the 2018 fishing period. The votes were 40 in favour, 22 opposed and 11 abstentions. MOTION PASSES.
12. The CB **CONSIDERED** closing dates, and again expressed the desire for the longest fishing period possible for stakeholders and consumers. A motion was put forward for a closing date of November 25th, some members **NOTED** that, with this date, the IPHC Secretariat would have to use incomplete data for their stock assessment. Vote counts were 22 in favour, 23 opposed and 7 abstentions. Due to lack of endorsement, MOTION FAILS.
13. The CB **MOTIONED** for a fishing period end date “no earlier than 7th November, or as long as the Commission was willing to keep the season open. By show of hands, MOTION PASSES.

Recommendation

14. The CB **RECOMMENDED** the following fishing period dates for the commercial fishery:
- a) Opening: 10 March 2018
 - b) Closing: no earlier than 7 November, with emphasis on longest season possible.

6. CATCH LIMITS

15. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-11 Rev_1 which provided a summary of IPHC Regulatory Area-specific mortality projections for 2018 based on the interim management procedure and other alternatives.

6.1 Coastwide perspectives

16. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-11 Rev_1 which provided a summary of IPHC Regulatory Area-specific TCEY 2018 Reference SPR values.
17. The CB **NOTED** concern regarding the stock assessment versus the anecdotal evidence seen on fishing grounds. The CB requested decision tables with the added elements from a 1/3 and 1/2 reduction from adopted 2017 TCEYs to the 2018 Reference SPR 46 (31 million pounds coastwide TCEY). Concerns included whale depredation on survey stations and the concern over the impacts of continually setting catch limits higher than recommended by the IPHC Secretariat. Several CB members expressed concern about recruitment. CB members agreed there was benefit in trying to achieve a consensus on a coastwide TCEY target and catch limit recommendations across all areas.

6.2 Individual area discussion

18. The CB **NOTED** Area 2A CB members from the Makah Tribal Nation concerns over a potential decrease in 2018 quota and economic and social impacts on their community members. It was **NOTED** that the Makah fishers had a 2017 harvest seemingly in contrast to FISS data. Other 2A recreational fishers agreed.
19. The CB **NOTED** the comment from Area 2A CB members that 2017 was an anomalous year in terms of environmental conditions that may have negatively affected the FISS due to the presence of an hypoxic event. Area representatives **NOTED** that a static level of removals in Area 2A will not have a negative impact on the biomass or other IPHC Regulatory Areas.
20. The CB **NOTED** the comment from Area 2B CB members that downstream impacts of Alaskan halibut bycatch on the 2B stocks, and indicated that an SPR 46 TCEY of 3.84 million pounds would not be acceptable due to its linkage with the current stock distribution method and impacts to local communities and economies. Area 2B CB members explained that their 2017 catches did not reflect the stock decreases seen in the FISS data and that the fishery dependent versus fishery independent data be taken into account by the Commission. Members further expressed concern with lower catches in areas with high levels of pyrosomes and dogfish. Area 2B CB members highlighted long term positive trends in commercial

WPUE as well as steadily increasing survey WPUE and NPUE with the exception of the 2017 FISS which could be an anomaly.

21. The CB **NOTED** the comment from Area 2C Members and agreed with other fishers that the FISS results were in contrast to catches seen on the fishing grounds. Discussion items included matching Area 2B and 2C harvest rates and the major impact of quota cuts on recreational and commercial fishers. Several 2C CB members expressed interest in a slow up, fast down approach and that a stair-stepped methodology would be appropriate. Concern about low recruitment was comment upon but was not justification for draconian catch limit reductions. The IPHC FISS continues to show increasing trends as does the commercial WPUE.
22. The CB **NOTED** the comment from Area 3A CB members that improved commercial WPUE for the last several years including 2017. After discussion on 2017 FISS numbers, some CB members from 3A indicated that they would like to see equitable cuts across all regulatory areas. A CB member indicated that the 2017 FISS results were substantially lower than the directed fleets observations and commercial WPUE results for the season. The fleet experienced good fishing with an expectation that 2018 stocks would be the same or slightly better than 2017. In addition, it was highlighted that sablefish longliner in 2017 experienced unusually higher incidence of contact with halibut at depths below the FISS limit of 275 fathoms, suggesting that the “missing halibut” may have gone deep to avoid warmer ocean temperatures. Commercial WPUE in Area 3A was up 6% in 2017 from the previous year and the 3A 2017 FISS appears to be within normal year to year variability.
23. The CB **NOTED** the comment from CB members from Area 3B that had the same concerns as area 3A members, and some members would support a consistent SPR rate coast-wide. Further discussion topics included respecting the science provided by the IPHC Secretariat. However, CB member proposed the idea of a ½ or 1/3 drop as noted in the coast-wide perspective above rather than the 2018 reference SPR 46 percent. One 3B CB member supported 3B and all other areas all dropping together to the SPR 46 threshold. It was highlighted that 3B is conservatively managed with a harvest rate of 16.125%. If 3B was managed at the 21.5% harvest rate, the 2018 TCEY would be 3.32 Milb, not the 2.56 Milb in the 2018 reference SPR. Area 3A and 3B are considered one biological region and should have the same harvest rate based on a science. Area 3B FCEY was up 14% in 2017 and was the only area that accepted the 2017 reference level. CB members from 3B support a 1/3 down approach but nothing more than ½ down approach from the 2018 reference level.
24. The CB **NOTED** the comment from CB members from Area 4A that consistently higher commercial catches in 2017 in the absence of killer whale depredation.
25. The CB **NOTED** a comment from a CB member from 4B who questioned the discrepancy of the lower 4B harvest rate compared to other regulatory areas, and suggested that a status quo catch limit could be justified if the rate was corrected. This member also acknowledged concern over coastwide recruitment and the need to take a conservative approach.
26. The CB **NOTED** the comments from CB members from Areas 4CDE who expressed concern regarding quota cuts as their communities rely significantly upon Pacific halibut fishing. Although members support conservation, 4CDE fishers also indicated high catch rates in 2017. CDQ region member indicated the Pacific halibut fishery is the only employment opportunity for the Pribilof community. The FISS WPUE for island station in 4C, 4D and 4D edge stations are the highest they’ve been in the last five years, however the Bering Sea trawl survey brought down the overall 4CDE FISS WPUE. Commercial WPUE for 4C and 4D area the highest seen in the last 5 years with 4D having among the highest commercial WPUE in all areas. Representatives of this area support a stair stepped ½ to 1/3 down reduction in order to maintain stability for their fishers, processors and communities, and believe that the relatively small poundage translation between half down and the reference SPR 46% will not pose considerable risk to the halibut resource.
27. The CB further **DISCUSSED** 2018 catch limits and began hearing initial proposals regarding total TCEY.
28. The CB **RECEIVED** a series of tables breaking down several catch scenarios applying various SPR ratios and total TCEY from the IPHC Secretariat.

29. The CB **AGREED** to organize discussion around coastwide TCEYS of 31 Mlb, 35.5 Mlb, and 37.5 Mlb, with three different distribution methods which produced nine catch table alternatives. Some CB members **NOTED** that it is important to adhere to the science presented by the IPHC Secretariat and that upcoming low recruitment is a coastwide issue.
30. The CB **NOTED** the comment from a 2B member who suggested that 2B would support a proportional decrease of 12.88% for each area to get to a total TCEY of 35.5 Mlb. USA CB representatives indicated that this would result in TCEYs for 3A and 4B and 4CDE lower than the reference level of SPR of 46% (full down). Further, a US member of the CB commented that there were differences in abundance trends by area and this approach is not responsive to these differences.

Recommendation

31. The CB **RECOMMENDED** the following TCEY catch limits for the 2018 fishing period as provided in [Table 1](#), which translate to the mortality estimates by sector (as provided by the IPHC Secretariat) provided in [Appendix III](#).

Table 1. Conference Board (CB) recommended TCEY catch limits for 2018

IPHC Regulatory Area	Catch limit (TCEY) (Mlbs)	Votes
2A	1.47	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
2B	7.25	Canada: In favour 31, Against 0 USA: In favour 0, Against 44, 3 Abstained
2C	6.58	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
3A	12.66	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
3B	3.51	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4A	1.76	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4B	1.30	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4CDE	3.69	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
Total (IPHC Convention Area)	38.22	

32. The CB made a **MOTION** to approve catch limits for Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, and 4CDE to be decreased 33.3% from the adopted 2017 catch limits towards the 2018 reference level was made and seconded.
33. The CB **NOTED** the rationale in support of the motion which is a consistent approach that can be applied to all areas, it is responsive to the concern over upcoming low recruitment, it balances 2017 approved TCEY distribution with 2018 FISS results, and it is similar to the “fast down, slow up” harvest policy used in the past for large catch limit transitions.
34. The CB **NOTED** the comment from a CB member from Areas 3A and 3B made an amendment to the main motion to take 100% of the recommended reductions in Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, and 4CDE consistent with catch tables reflecting reference levels of SPR 46%.

Rationale

35. The CB **PROVIDED** the following Rationale:
- a) Adopting the 1/3 down approach creates unacceptable risk for future TCEY levels. The decision table provided by the IPHC Secretariat shows the 1/3 down option leads to a 93% chance that the 2019 TCEY will be less than 2018, and that by 2021 there is a 70% chance that the TCEY will be 10% less than 2018 levels.

- b) The 1/3 down option creates a TCEY 21% above the 2018 reference level, which is not sustainable particularly considering that adopted TCEY in 2017 was 15% above 2017 reference levels.
- c) A more precautionary approach, taking a “full down, slow up” approach better protects the stock and smooths out sharp increases and decreases.
- d) A conservative approach is needed this year to ensure a healthy stock for future generations.
- e) The amendment supports science-based fisheries management and decisions. There is no justification to deviate from the scientifically based 2018 reference levels, and while we recognize that the Commission can set whatever levels it deems appropriate, we are concerned about bearing the costs of any such decision in future years.
- f) MOTION FAILS by hand vote, Canada abstained as a block.
36. The CB **NOTED** that 6 CB members from a broad section of user groups supported this motion.
37. The CB **NOTED** that a member from Area 2A amended the main motion to include Area 2A TCEY of 1.47 Milb.
38. The CB **NOTED** that members from Area 2A and other US areas spoke in support of the motion. Members talked about the survey, the hypoxic event, the socio-economic needs of the tribes and other communities, and anecdotally high catch rates. Approved by hand vote. MOTION PASSES. Canada abstained.
39. The CB **NOTED** an amended motion: 2A TCEY of 1.47 Milb and catch limits for Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, and 4CDE to be decreased 33.3% from the adopted 2017 catch limits towards the 2018 reference level. Vote: US -Yes 42; No 4 - Canada abstained.
40. The CB **NOTED** that Canada **MOVED** to approve and Area 2B TCEY 7.25 Milb for 2018.
41. The CB **NOTED** the following perspectives shared by Canadian members of the CB:
- a) Canada is concerned about recruitment and the apparent reduction in the number of smaller fish.
 - b) Like other areas, we saw some anomalies in 2017 and are hopeful that next year will show improvements but we think action is needed this year and that is why we are pursuing a stepped approach and proposing a reduction of 12.88% from the adopted 2017 Area 2B TCEY.
 - c) The proposal is consistent with Canada’s national share of around 19% as established by Commissioners in recent years.
 - d) Canada was proposing a reduction of 12.88% from the 2017 TCEY. While the proposals for most of US areas achieved a reduction of less than 5%.
 - e) Canada was pleased to note that the US had supported the principle that catch limits need not be based on the current stock distribution model by proposing a divergent share for area 2A.
 - f) Canada remains concerned about:
 - i. attempts to use unacceptable stock distribution or “apportionment” methodology as a means to allocate the coastwide TCEY given the unfair implications for all of area 2.
 - ii. the level of bycatch in Regions 3 and 4 -- Canada is encouraged by the estimated reduction in bycatch in Region 4, however, the U26 bycatch mortalities affects all areas, including Area 2B.
 - iii. the precision and accuracy of bycatch mortality estimates in Regions 3 and 4, particularly Region 3 given the statements in the IPHC Fishery Statistics paper (page 23).
 - iv. the long term survey trends in Regions 3 and 4, particularly Region 3.

- v. the fact the Total Mortality of some Regulatory Areas consistently exceeds those areas' TCEY - there is overharvesting in some areas above the TCEY.
- g) The USA CB members spoke in opposition to the motion, NOTING the desire for consistency across all areas, the fact that the 1/3 down approach balances 2017 approved TCEY distribution with 2018 reference SPR. Other areas, like 2C, that have strong abundance indices agree to the 1/3 down approach. US CB members also indicated that Canada's ongoing concern over US bycatch is not sufficient justification for continued harvest disproportionate to other areas, and support a 2B TCEY of 6.83 Mlb consistent with the 1/3 down approach. Vote: Canada - unanimous Yes 31; US – No 44, 3 Abstentions.

7. REGULATORY PROPOSALS FOR 2018

7.1 *IPHC Secretariat regulatory proposals*

7.1.1 *IPHC Closed Area (Sect. 10)*

- 42. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropA1 which considered the intent and purpose of the IPHC Closed Area, as defined in IPHC Fishery Regulations (2017) Section 10, which currently excludes directed Pacific “halibut fishing” (i.e. the longline fleet), with the intent of protecting juveniles from extraction.
- 43. The CB **RECOMMENDED** that Option 2 be adopted with the amended language: “*Agree that the Closed Area is not currently meeting its intended objective of protecting juvenile halibut when it is open to non-directed fisheries, and URGES, in coordination with NPMFC, the IPHC Secretariat to examine alternative management regimes for the Closed Area, and for these to be presented at the 96th Annual Meeting in 2020.*”
- 44. The CB **QUESTIONED** if the IPHC Closed Area was biologically distinct from other areas in the Bering Sea and considered a designated nursery area.
- 45. The CB **RECOGNIZED** that the directed halibut fishery is currently the only fishery excluded from the area and that because a significant amount of bycatch is taken from the area, the closure was not meeting its management objective to protect juvenile halibut. Members also **RECOGNIZED** that more analysis was needed to determine whether alternative management was warranted and acknowledged the different authorities of the IPHC and NPFMC to implement any changes.
- 46. The CB **URGED** the IPHC Secretariat to work with NPFMC to identify the specific biological importance of this area and the potential impacts of opening the area to directed fishing, specifically, whether there would be any implications to the Catch Share Plan in 4 CDE and who would be able to participate in this area. In addition, the CB **NOTED** that previous tagging studies showed this area to be of migratory importance and net emigration to other regulatory areas in the GOA and beyond.

7.1.2 *Commercial fishing periods (Sect. 8)*

- 47. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-IM093-PropA2 which proposed establishing fixed fishing periods for the commercial Pacific halibut fisheries. See [Section 5](#) above.
- 48. The CB **NOTED** the suggestion that the CB consider the area 2A directed commercial fishing period dates to start on the last Wednesday in June and every other Wednesday as quota remains. The CB was silent on this issue and referred it to the Commission.

7.1.3 *Removal of exemption for Vessel Monitoring System requirement for IPHC Regulatory Area 4 clearances (Sect. 15)*

- 49. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropA3 which proposed streamlining regulatory requirements and improve monitoring for IPHC Regulatory Area 4 by requiring vessel monitoring systems (VMS) instead of an IPHC Clearance.

50. The CB **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat investigate whether vessels with EM would meet with VMS check in/out requirements in area 4A. By hand count, MOTION PASSES. The CB remained silent on the need for VMS requirements for Area 4 Clearance.

7.1.4 IPHC Fishery Regulations: minor amendments

51. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropA4 which proposed amendments to ensure clarity and consistency in the IPHC Fishery Regulations.

52. The CB **NOTED** that Area 2B members questioned language that said possession limits had been changed from three to two. It was **NOTED** that a limit of three remained in regulation but could be varied by condition of license on an annual basis.

53. The CB **RECOMMENDED** to strike the recommended language change and provide correct wording. By show of hands, motion PASSES

7.1.5 Discussion paper: Frozen-at-sea exemption for head-on requirement (Sect. 13)

54. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropA5 which proposed a discussion on retaining or removing the frozen-at-sea head-on exemption into the future.

55. The CB **RECOMMENDED** to continue the exemption allowing frozen-at-sea vessels to land head-off halibut as discussion continues. MOTION PASSES by hand vote.

7.2 Contracting Party (by agency) regulatory proposals

7.2.1 Alaska CDQ Leasing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4

56. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropB1 Rev_1 which proposed IPHC Regulation changes to allow the use of leased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) by Community Development Quota (CDQ) organizations in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4B, 4C, 4D and 4E.

57. The CB **RECOMMENDED** to support PropB1 Rev_1. Motion passed by show of hands.

7.2.2 Clarify Alaska Sport Fishery Regulations

58. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropB2 which proposed a clarification to the IPHC Regulations regarding retention of Pacific halibut caught in the recreational charter fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A.

59. The CB **RECOMMENDED** supporting PropB2. Proposal passes by hand vote.

7.2.3 Clarify Head-On Weight Requirement in Alaska Commercial Fisheries

60. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropB3 which proposed clarifications to the IPHC Regulations regarding the landing of Pacific halibut with the head on.

61. The CB **RECOMMENDED** supporting PropB3. Proposal passes by hand vote.

7.3 Stakeholder regulatory proposals

7.3.1 Commercial Catch Limits (Sect. 11): Proposals

62. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC1 which summarises catch limit proposals received from stakeholders. Entries in the table reflect the individual proposals, and unless otherwise noted, proposals are expressed as TCEY (with values in millions of pounds) for particular IPHC Regulatory Areas or as a total for the whole coast. See [Section 6](#) above.

7.3.2 Other stakeholder regulatory proposals

63. The CB **NOTED** papers IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC2-17 which detailed 16 regulatory proposals from various stakeholders, for potential adoption and implementation in the 2018 fishing season, including a number for **RECOMMENDATION**.

- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC2 Preserving catch on private live-aboard vessels (A. Cooper)

- There was no CB member to discuss on PropC2. By show of hands, PropC2 was not endorsed for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC3 For unguided sport fishing (P. Phillips)
 - There was no CB member to speak to PropC3.
 - The CB **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat draft a letter to the NPFMC addressing the need for more accurate reporting of the non-guided recreational sector for Areas 2C and 3A. By show of hands, PropC3 was **RECOMMENDED** for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC4 Sport Fishing for Halibut - Cleaning Regulations (S. Riehemann)
 - The CB **NOTED** that updated technology could help alleviate this ongoing issue with the recreational fishery. By show of hands, PropC4 was not endorsed for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC5 Elimination of skin-on regulation (J. Shirk)
 - There was no CB member to speak to PropC5. Motion made to adopt IPHC Secretariat revision to regulation language as pertaining to skin-on regulation. By show of hands, PropC5 was **RECOMMENDED** for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC6 Live-aboard processing exemption (D. Robertson)
 - There was no CB member to speak to PropC6. By show of hands, C6 was not endorsed for adoption
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC7 Eliminate the requirement for a CHP (S. Riehemann)
 - The CB **NOTED** that this issue needs to be dealt with by the NPFMC. By show of hands, PropC7 was not endorsed for publication.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC8 Allow shellfish pots on board (ALFA)
 - The CB **NOTED** that shellfish pots on commercial vessels is an ongoing issue for the IPHC and the NPFMC, and **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat form a working group with relevant regulatory and enforcement agencies to clarify the language regarding this issue. By show of hands, PropC8 was **RECOMMENDED** for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC9 Processing halibut greater than four filets (M. Cowart)
 - The CB **NOTED** that this is a long standing problem and **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat work with new technology to resolve the regulation. By show of hands, PropC9 is not endorsed for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC10 Halibut length measurement method (R. Yamada)
 - The CB **NOTED** they were in support of changing regulations for measurement processes, and disagrees with the IPHC Secretariat that measuring fish on the top or bottom will produce the same measurement. The CB **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat conduct outreach with stakeholders and enforcement agencies to resolve this issue. By show of hands, PropC10 was **RECOMMENDED** for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC11 Long term storage aboard pleasure vessels (L. Thompson)
 - The CB expressed the same concern as previous motions regarding this issue. By show of hands, PropC11 was not endorsed for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC12 Long term storage on cruising vessels (W. Cornell)
 - The CB expressed the same concern as previous motions regarding this issue. By show of hands, PropC11 was not endorsed for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC13 Halibut in Bering Sea pots (J. Kauffman)
 - The CB **NOTED** general support for this proposition. CB member concerns included small halibut potentially used as bait in subsequent fishing, unattended gear left for long soak times, and the need for pot escape mechanisms. By show of hands, PropC13 was **RECOMMENDED** for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC14 Status Quo Harvest Measures for Guided Anglers in Area 3A (R. Yamada)

- PropC14 author withdrew this proposition No action taken.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC15 Trawler Halibut Bycatch Tender boat program (J. Kearns)
 - No CB member spoke to PropC15. By show of hands, PropC15 was not endorsed for adoption.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC16 Recreational Bag Limit 2C and 3A in times of low abundance (M. Grove)
 - The CB expressed confusion as to the stakeholders involved in the possible implementation of this proposition and the potential inclusion of subsistence fishers in Alaska. Members noted the goal of unifying the entire recreational sector, guided and unguided, to fall under the same regulation regarding catch limits. MOTION: The CB **REQUESTED** that the IPHC Secretariat write a letter to relevant agencies, including NPFMC, addressing disparate bag limits in Alaska recreational fisheries, particularly in times of low abundance. By vote: 30 in favor, 5 against and 9 abstentions. Canada abstains as a block. MOTION PASSES.
- IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC17 Recreational sportsfishing only allocation (J. Kearns)
 - The CB **NOTED** that this action falls under the rule of NPFMC. By show of hands, PropC17 was not endorsed for adoption.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 *Minimum Size Limit*

64. The CB **NOTED** paper IPHC-2018-AM094-14 which provided a response to the Commission request made during the 2016 Interim Meeting (IPHC 2016): IM092–Req.07 (para. 73) “*The Commission REQUESTED that a review of the analysis of the effectiveness of size limits be undertaken by the IPHC Staff throughout 2017, for consideration by the Commission at its annual meeting in 2018.*”
65. The CB **RECOMMENDED** to take no further action on the MSL matter, and that IPHC Secretariat actions were satisfactory. Motion passed by hand vote.

8.2 *Documentation*

66. The CB made a **MOTION**, that for future Annual Meetings, the IPHC Secretariat provide a streamlined version of The Blue Book for CB members that contains relevant documents in regards to catch limit discussions. For example: SPR ratios, decision tables, risk tables, WPUE Commercial graphs, O32 FISS data, NPUE FISS data and FCEY/TCEY conversions for previous years, fishery average fish weight, and navigation to meeting. The CB also requested at least one hard copy of RARA be available for reference. In addition, the CB requests the IPHC Secretariat provide a method to produce adequate paper copies of requested documents to CB members in future meetings. By hand vote, MOTION PASSES.

8.3 *MSAB goals and objectives*

67. The CB **NOTED** the request for input and help with MSAB process. The CB encouraged members to provide recommendations regarding goals and objectives to their MSAB representative.

9. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 88TH SESSION OF THE IPHC CONFERENCE BOARD (CB088)

68. The report of the 88th Session of the IPHC Conference Board (IPHC-2018-CB088-R) was **ADOPTED** on 26 January 2018, including the consolidated set of recommendations and requests arising from CB088, provided at [Appendix IV](#).

APPENDIX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE 88TH SESSION OF THE IPHC CONFERENCE BOARD (CB088)****Officers**

Co-Chairperson	Co-Chairperson
Mr. Martin Paish (Canada)	Mr. Jeff Kauffman (United States of America)

**CB Members
(Canada)**

Member	Representative
A`Tlegay Fisheries Society	Christa Rusel
Annieville Halibut Association	Terry Henshaw
Area F Troll Association	Bud Schuler
BC Commercial Integrated Groundfish Society	Bruce Turris
BC Halibut Longline Fisherman's Assoc.	Wilf Phillips
BC Longline Fisherman's Association	Colleen van der Heide
BC Tuna Fisherman's Association	Peter DeGreef
BC Wildlife Federation	Ted Brookman
Canadian Sablefish Association	Gary Williamson
FAS Seafoods	Art Davidson
Gulf Trollers Association	Angus Grout
Council of Haida Nation	Robert Bennett
Halibut Advisory Board	David Boyes
Hook and Line Groundfish Association	Ken Wing
IMAWG	Carl Edgar Jr. (?)
Northern Halibut Producer's Assoc.	Tim Courtier
Northern Trollers Association	Esther Sample
North Pac Halibut Fisherman's Assn	Robert Stanley
Pacific Coast Fishing Vessel Owners Guild	Quincy Sample
Pacific Trollers Association	Tiare Boyes
PHMA	Chris Sporer
Sport Fishing Advisory Board – Main	Gerry Kristianson
Sport Fishing Advisory Board - South	Chuck Ashcroft
Sport Fishing Advisory Board - North	Doug Daugert
Steveston Halibut Assoc.	Herb van Grootel
Sport Fishing Institute of BC	Owen Bird
Sydney Anglers Association	Kevin Begley
South Vancouver Island Anglers Coalition Society	Gordon Martin
UFAWU	Russell Cameron
Vancouver Island Longline Assoc.	Lyle Pierce
West Coast Fishing Guides Association	Bill Shaw

United States of America	
Member	Representative
Adak Commercial Development Corporation	None indicated
Alaska Charter Association	
Alaska Troller's Association	
Alaska Longline Fisherman's Association	
Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association	
Aleut Corporation	
Aleutian Pribilof Island Community Development Association	
Area 4 Harvesters Alliance	
Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association	
Coastal Conservation Association	
Coastside Representaive	
Deep Sea Fishermen's Union of the Pacific	
Edmonds Veteran Indev Longliners	
Fishing Vessel Owners Assoc. (FVOA)	
Freezer Longliner Coalition	
Halibut Coalition	
Homer Charter Association	
Jamestown S'Kallum Tribe	
Juneau Charter Boat Association	
Humbolt Area Saltwater Anglers	
Kodiak Vessel Owners Association	
Kruzof Fisheries	
K Bay Fishermen Association	
Lower Elwa	
Lummi Indian Nation	
Makah Tribe	
North Pacific Fisheries Association	
Oregon Coast Charter Association	
Petersburg Vessel Owners Association	
Point no Point Treaty Council	
Port Gambel S'Klallam Tribe	
Pudget Sound Anglers	
Quiliute Tribe	
Quinault Indian Nation	
Recreational Fishing Alliance-Oregon Chapter	
Seafood Producers Coop	
SE Alaska Fishermen's Alliance	
Sitka Halibut & Blackcod Marketing Assoc.	
Skokomish Indian Tribe	
St. Paul Fishermen's Association	
Tribal Government of St. Paul	
Swinomish Tribal Communities	
Tulalip Tribes	
United Cook Inlet Drift Association	
Westport Charter Association	
West Brothers Group	
Yukon Delta Fisheries Association	

IPHC Secretariat

Ms Lara Erikson: lara@iphc.int

Ms Tracee Geernaert: tracee@iphc.int

Ms Jessica Marx

APPENDIX II**AGENDA FOR THE 88TH SESSION OF THE IPHC CONFERENCE BOARD (CB088)****Date:** 23–24 January 2018**Location:** Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.**Venue:** Grand Ballroom I, Hilton Portland & Executive Tower**Time:** 23rd: 13:30-17:00; 24th: 09:00-17:00**Co-Chairpersons:** Mr Martin Paish (Canada) and Mr Jeff Kauffman (United States of America)**Vice-Chairpersons:** Nil.

- 1. OPENING OF THE SESSION**
 - 1.1 Election of Co-Chairpersons
 - 1.2 Accreditation of Membership for CB088
- 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION**
- 3. BYCATCH**
- 4. IPHC SECRETARIAT INFORMATIONAL SESSION**
- 5. FISHING PERIODS: SEASON OPENING AND CLOSING DATES**
- 6. CATCH LIMITS**
 - 6.1 Coastwide perspectives
 - 6.2 Regulatory Area perspectives
- 7. REGULATORY PROPOSALS FOR 2018**
 - 7.1 IPHC Secretariat regulatory proposals
 - 7.2 Contracting Party (by agency) regulatory proposals
 - 7.3 Other Stakeholder regulatory proposals
- 8. OTHER BUSINESS**
- 9. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 88th SESSION OF THE IPHC CONFERENCE BOARD (CB088)**

APPENDIX III**PACIFIC HALIBUT MORTALITY PROJECTED FOR 2018 BASED ON THE CB RECOMMENDED TCEY CATCH LIMITS**

Note: All values reported in millions of net pounds. Provided by the IPHC Secretariat based on the CB 2018 TCEY recommendations.

	IPHC Regulatory Area								
	2A	2B	2C	3A	3B	4A	4B	4CDE	Total
<u>O26 Non-FCEY</u>									
Commercial discards	0.02	0.15	NA	NA	0.20	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.49
Bycatch	0.11	0.23	0.02	1.01	0.45	0.29	0.20	1.96	4.26
Recreational (+ discards)	NA	NA	1.43	1.86	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.00	3.31
Subsistence	NA	0.41	0.44	0.22	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.05	1.14
Total Non-FCEY	0.13	0.78	1.89	3.09	0.67	0.37	0.23	2.04	9.20
<u>O26 FCEY</u>									
Commercial discard	NA	NA	0.07	0.32	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.39
Recreational (+ discards)	0.53	0.99	0.86	1.81	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.19
Subsistence	0.03	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.03
Commercial Landings	0.78	5.48	3.76	7.45	2.84	1.39	1.07	1.65	24.40
Total FCEY	1.34	6.47	4.69	9.58	2.84	1.39	1.07	1.65	29.02
TCEY	1.47	7.25	6.58	12.66	3.51	1.76	1.30	3.69	38.22
<u>U26</u>									
Commercial discards	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.05
Bycatch	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.42	0.44	0.11	0.01	0.79	1.79
Total U26	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.43	0.46	0.12	0.01	0.79	1.83
Total Mortality	1.47	7.28	6.58	13.09	3.96	1.88	1.31	4.48	40.05

APPENDIX IV

**CONSOLIDATED SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS OF THE 88TH SESSION OF THE
IPHC CONFERENCE BOARD (CB088) (22-24 JANUARY 2018)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Fishing periods: season opening and closing dates

CB088-Rec.01 ([para. 14](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** the following fishing period dates for the commercial fishery:

- a) Opening: 10 March 2018
- b) Closing: no earlier than 7 November, with emphasis on longest season possible.

Catch limits

CB088-Rec.02 ([para. 31](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** the following TCEY catch limits for the 2018 fishing period as provided in [Table 1](#), which translate to the mortality estimates by sector (as provided by the IPHC Secretariat) provided in [Appendix III](#).

Table 1. Conference Board (CB) recommended TCEY catch limits for 2018

IPHC Regulatory Area	Catch limit (TCEY) (Mlbs)	Votes
2A	1.47	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
2B	7.25	Canada: In favour 31, Against 0 USA: In favour 0, Against 44, 3 Abstained
2C	6.58	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
3A	12.66	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
3B	3.51	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4A	1.76	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4B	1.30	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
4CDE	3.69	USA: In favour 42, Against 4 Canada: Abstained
Total (IPHC Convention Area)	38.22	

IPHC Secretariat regulatory proposals

IPHC Closed Area (Sect. 10)

CB088-Rec.03 ([para. 43](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** that Option 2 be adopted with the amended language: “Agree that the Closed Area is not currently meeting its intended objective of protecting juvenile halibut when it is open to non-directed fisheries, and **URGES**, in coordination with NPMFC, the IPHC Secretariat to examine alternative management regimes for the Closed Area, and for these to be presented at the 96th Annual Meeting in 2020.”

Removal of exemption for Vessel Monitoring System requirement for IPHC Regulatory Area 4 clearances (Sect. 15)

CB088-Rec.04 ([para. 50](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** that the IPHC Secretariat investigate whether vessels with EM would meet with VMS check in/out requirements in area 4A. By hand count, MOTION PASSES. The CB remained silent on the need for VMS requirements for Area 4 Clearance.

IPHC Fishery Regulations: minor amendments

CB088-Rec.05 ([para. 53](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** to strike the recommended language change and provide correct wording. By show of hands, motion PASSES

Discussion paper: Frozen-at-sea exemption for head-on requirement (Sect. 13)

CB088-Rec.06 ([para. 55](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** to continue the exemption allowing frozen-at-sea vessels to land head-off halibut as discussion continues. MOTION PASSES by hand vote.

Contracting Party (by agency) regulatory proposals***Alaska CDQ Leasing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4***

CB088-Rec.07 ([para. 57](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** to support PropB1 Rev_1. Motion passed by show of hands.

Clarify Alaska Sport Fishery Regulations

CB088-Rec.08 ([para. 59](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** supporting PropB2. Proposal passes by hand vote.

Clarify Head-On Weight Requirement in Alaska Commercial Fisheries

CB088-Rec.09 ([para. 61](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** supporting PropB3. Proposal passes by hand vote.

Stakeholder regulatory proposals

CB088-Rec.10 ([para. 63](#)) The CB **NOTED** papers IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC2-17 which detailed 16 regulatory proposals from various stakeholders, for potential adoption and implementation in the 2018 fishing season, including a number for **RECOMMENDATION**.

Minimum Size Limit

CB088-Rec.11 ([para. 65](#)) The CB **RECOMMENDED** to take no further action on the MSL matter, and that IPHC Secretariat actions were satisfactory. Motion passed by hand vote.