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## OUTCOMES OF THE 99<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE IPHC ANNUAL MEETING (AM099)

PREPARED BY: IPHC SECRETARIAT (D. WILSON, 26 OCTOBER 2023)

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### PURPOSE

To provide the RAB with the outcomes of the 99<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099), relevant to the mandate of the RAB.

### BACKGROUND

The agenda of the Commission's Annual Meeting (AM099) included several agenda items relevant to the RAB:

### 3. IPHC PROCESS

- 3.1 *Update on actions arising from the 98<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM098), 2022 Special Sessions, intersessional decisions, and the 98<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Interim Meeting (IM098) (D. Wilson)*
- 3.2 *Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2022) (D. Wilson & B. Hutniczak)*
- 3.3 *2<sup>nd</sup> IPHC Performance Review (PRIPHC02): Implementation of recommendations (D. Wilson)*
- 3.4 *International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-year program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26) (D. Wilson, J. Planas, I. Stewart, A. Hicks, R. Webster, B. Hutniczak)*
- 3.5 *Report of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the IPHC Research Advisory Board (RAB023) (D. Wilson, J. Planas)*
- 3.6 *Reports of the IPHC Scientific Review Board (SRB Chairperson)*

### 4. FISHERY MONITORING

- 4.1 *Fishery-dependent data overview (2022)*
- 4.2 *Fishery-independent data overview (2022)*
  - 4.2.1 *IPHC Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS) design and implementation in 2022 (K. Ualesi)*

### 5. STOCK STATUS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT (2022) AND HARVEST DECISION TABLE 2023

- 5.1 *Space-time modelling of survey data (R. Webster)*
- 5.2 *2023-25 FISS design evaluation (R. Webster)*
- 5.3 *Stock Assessment: Data overview and stock assessment (2022), and harvest decision table (2023) (I. Stewart, A. Hicks, R. Webster, D. Wilson, & B. Hutniczak)*
- 5.4 *Pacific halibut mortality projections using the IPHC mortality projection tool (2023) (I. Stewart)*

### 6. BIOLOGICAL AND ECOSYSTEM SCIENCES – PROJECT UPDATES

- 6.1 *Report on Current and Future Biological and Ecosystem Science Research Activities (J. Planas)*

### 7. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION

- 7.1 *Report of the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB017) (Co-Chairpersons)*
- 7.2 *IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update (A. Hicks)*

### DISCUSSION

During the course of the 99<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099) the Commission made a number of specific recommendations and requests for action regarding the stock assessment, MSE process, and 5-year research program. Relevant sections from the report of the meeting are provided in [Appendix A](#) for the RAB's consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the RAB:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2023-RAB024-04 which details the outcomes of the 99<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099), relevant to the mandate of the RAB.

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A**: Excerpts from the 99<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099) Report ([IPHC-2023-AM099-R](#)).

**APPENDIX A**  
**Excerpt from the 99<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM099) Report**  
**(IPHC-2023-AM099-R)**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

***International Pacific Halibut Commission 5-year program of Integrated Research and Monitoring (2022-26)***

AM099–Rec.01 ([para. 12](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Secretariat annually present potential changes to the Plan at the IPHC Interim Meeting. The Commission would then have the opportunity to provide any redirection based on Commission priorities and available funding. To assist in making that assessment, the Secretariat will be preparing a progress report annually.

***IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update***

AM099–Rec.02 ([para. 76](#)) The Commission **RECOMMENDED** that for the purpose of a comprehensive and intelligible Harvest Strategy Policy (HSP), four coastwide objectives should be documented within the HSP, in priority order:

- a) Maintain the long-term coastwide female spawning stock biomass above a biomass limit reference point (B20%) at least 95% of the time.
- b) Maintain the long-term coastwide female spawning stock biomass at or above a biomass reference point (B36%) 50% or more of the time.
- c) Optimise average coastwide TCEY.
- d) Limit annual changes in the coastwide TCEY.

AM099–Rec.03 ([para. 84](#)) The Commission **AGREED** sufficient analysis has been completed and **RECOMMENDED** not to change the current 32 inch size limit.

**REQUESTS**

***2023-25 FISS design evaluation***

AM099–Req.01 ([para. 35](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** a desktop review to determine if reducing bait size on the FISS would substantially reduce costs, while not reducing catch rates and associated fish sale revenue to any large degree.

AM099–Req.02 ([para. 44](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that the Secretariat provide a breakdown of costs associated with the FISS over the last three (3) years and what is projected for the 2023 FISS, and for this to be presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Commission (SS013).

***Pacific halibut mortality projections using the IPHC mortality projection tool (2023)***

AM099–Req.03 ([para. 61](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** a table be prepared annually that details the historical TCEY decisions, that is currently published on the IPHC website [<https://www.iphc.int/uploads/data/time-series-datasets/excel/iphc-2023-tsd-017.xlsx>]

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**Report on current and future biological and ecosystem science research activities**

- AM099–Req.04 ([para. 66](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that the Secretariat provide a summary of the proposed and ongoing research projects at the Secretariat, including status updates, suggestions for potential priority setting by the Commission, links to the IPHC’s mandate and how the research will inform decision-making, guidance on types of research that should be considered for internal funding versus types of research that would be contingent on the availability of external funding or partnerships, among other criteria that may be requested by the Commission.
- AM099–Req.05 ([para. 67](#)) The Commission **REQUESTED** that the Secretariat highlight the elements of its 5YRPIRM (the Plan) that will inform its understanding of the impacts of climate change on Pacific halibut in its annual presentations of the research Plan to the Commission.

**IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation: update**

- AM099–Req.06 ([para. 88](#)) **NOTING** paragraph 60 from the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the SRB (SRB021), the Commission **REQUESTED** the Secretariat develop a description of options to responding to exceptional circumstances that would trigger a stock assessment in non-assessment years and additional MSE analyses.

IPHC-2022-SRB021-R, para 60: *The SRB RECOMMENDED that Exceptional Circumstances be defined to determine whether monitoring information has potentially departed from their expected distributions generated by the MSE. Declaration of Exceptional Circumstances may warrant re-opening and revising the operating models and testing procedures used to justify a particular management procedure.*