



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:HAL 18-004

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Dan Hull, Chairman
David Witherell, Executive Director

SUBJECT:

Mixing of guided and unguided halibut - Final Action

STAFF CONTACT: Jon McCracken (NPFMC)

ACTION REQUIRED:

- Public Review of analysis to limit possession of guided and unguided halibut on the same vessel.
- Recommend preferred alternative.

BACKGROUND:

At the June 2016 meeting, the Council tasked the Enforcement Committee to prepare a discussion paper on the mixing of guided and unguided halibut on the same vessel. Different regulations apply to guided and unguided (i.e., chartered and non-chartered) halibut fishing trips. For example, unguided sport fishermen may harvest halibut of any size without restriction and they are not subject to an annual catch limit. Charter vessel anglers, or guided fishermen, on the other hand, are subject to restrictive regulations on daily bag limit, size, daily closures, and annual catch limit.

The Enforcement Committee developed a discussion paper to address the Council's June 2016 request. After reviewing the discussion paper during the February 2017 meeting, the Council initiated an analysis for limiting the mixing of guided and unguided halibut on the same vessel. Alternatives for consideration include: (1) no action; (2) prohibit the possession of guided and unguided halibut simultaneously on any vessel; and (3) if halibut harvested using sport fishing guide services is possessed with halibut harvested not using sport fishing guide services in IPHC Area 2C or 3A, the IPHC annual management measures for guided sport fishing for the area that the halibut was harvested apply to all halibut onboard the fishing vessel.

In October 2017, the Council reviewed the initial review draft that analyzed a proposed action and released the document for public review. The Council selected Alternative 3 as its preliminary preferred alternative.