



North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Halibut Abundance-based Management (ABM) Stakeholder Committee

MINUTES

Teleconference: Thursday, November 29, 2018

10am-12pm

The Halibut ABM Stakeholder Committee was formed to provide the Council with recommendations for the scenarios to be analyzed in the upcoming halibut abundance-based management PSC limit analysis. The Committee will also provide recommendations on measurable objectives and associated performance metrics to be considered by analysts in evaluating trade-offs among alternatives. The purpose of this initial meeting was to review the committee Terms of Reference (TOR), discuss the process and timing by which recommendations on ABM scenarios would be provided, additional information requests of Council staff and to establish a date and location for the next Committee meeting. The agenda and TOR are attached.

Committee Members in attendance:

Andy Mezirow (Chair)

Ruth Christiansen

Angel Drobnica

Members absent: Bob Alverson

Arne Fuglvog

Heather McCarty

Chad See

Simeon Swetzof

Chris Woodley

Diana Stram (staff)

Agency staff:

Sam Cunningham (NPFMC), Jon McCracken (NPFMC), Allan Hicks (IPHC), Diana Evans (NPFMC)
Anne Marie Eich (NMFS RO), Dana Hanselman (NMFS AFSC), Carey McGilliard (NMFS AFSC)

Members of the public:

Jeff Kaufman, Henry Mitchell, John Gauvin, Matteo Paz Soldon, Mark Fina, Raymond Melovidov

The Chair, Andy Mezirow, opened the meeting by introducing committee members and public on the teleconference from various locales and explained the scope of this organizational teleconference.

Task 1

Diana Stram reviewed the draft Terms of Reference document (attached) and the specific tasks for the committee, noting that the primary focus of the Committee is to provide a range of up to four different scenarios from within the current alternative set, specifying each individual option from the different elements and options within the suite of three action alternatives¹. Each example scenario provided to the Committee for consideration should also provide a written rationale detailing how this combination of elements and options provided in the scenario is intended to address the Council's Purpose and Need statement and the 5 management objectives.

The Chair noted that analysts will also be providing bookends in the analysis (for October) in addition to those put forward by the Committee. The scenarios selected by analysts are intended to provide contrast in the analysis and to show the individual behavior of specific options. Thus, committee members should look for realistic scenarios rather than focus on drafting bookends (that will already be included). It was

¹ Per Council discussion in October 2018 and with appropriate accompanying rationale, elements and options and/or management measures outside of the current alternative set may be considered by the committee as necessary.

clarified that while public comments will be taken at the committee meeting, it is not anticipated that additional scenarios will be brought forward from the public but that interested stakeholders would work with committee members in the development of scenarios for review.

Task 2

Diana reviewed the second task of the Committee to discuss and provide recommendations on appropriate performance metrics for evaluating Council objectives for the October analysis. She suggested that as with the scenarios, any proposed objectives and metrics should be accompanied by a rationale to indicate why a specific metric would provide a good measure of a specific objective. Committee members indicated that reviewing scenarios and making recommendations on measurable objectives and performance metrics is likely to be beyond the scope of a single meeting as proposed for February and a follow up meeting for the second task may be preferable.

Informational requests of staff

Diana requested feedback from the committee on what background information they would like to see posted to assist them with consideration of scenarios and performance metrics. A draft list of ideas was discussed, and it was decided that committee members would have until Wednesday, December 5th to send requests to Diana. She will synthesize the list for committee distribution along with a status update of when (and if) specific requests can be accommodated and when they will be posted. All information requests and motions from previous Council meetings on ABM will be posted to the committee page beginning next week at: <https://www.npfmc.org/halibut-abm-stakeholder-committee/>

Next Committee meeting

The next meeting of the stakeholder committee will occur on February 4th, 2019 8am-12pm in conjunction with the Portland Council meeting. The deadline for submission of scenarios with accompanying rationale for posting to the ABM Stakeholder Committee website is January 21st, 2019 to allow committee members and the public two weeks to review them prior to the meeting. Any proposed performance metrics or measurable objectives should also be submitted at that time for consideration at the meeting in February.

The Chair concluded the meeting noting that the intent of the Committee's task is not that consensus must be reached for including each individual scenario across the committee but rather that the range to be discussed in February provide realistic contrast representing stakeholder intent geared toward Council objectives to be included in the analysis. The report from the committee meeting will be drafted by staff and approved by the Chair prior to posting to the Council's December agenda under the Executive Director's report. Andy will provide an update under that agenda item at the December Council meeting.

NPFMC Halibut ABM Stakeholder Committee

Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures

October 2018

1. **Purpose:** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will establish an issue-specific Halibut Abundance-based management (ABM) Stakeholder Committee (committee) to draft alternative scenarios from within the current alternative set for the forthcoming BSAI Halibut ABM EIS/RIR.

2. **Tasks for Committee:**

Task 1: The committee's primary function is to provide a range of up to four different scenarios from within the current alternative set, specifying each individual option from the different elements and options within the suite of three action alternatives². Each example scenario provided to the Committee for consideration should also provide a written rationale detailing how this combination of elements and options provided in the scenario is intended to address the Council's Purpose and Need statement and the 5 management objectives below:

The current fixed yield-based halibut PSC caps are inconsistent with management of the directed halibut fisheries and Council management of groundfish fisheries, which are managed based on abundance. When halibut abundance declines, PSC becomes a larger proportion of total halibut removals and thereby further reduces the proportion and amount of halibut available for harvest in directed halibut fisheries. Conversely, if halibut abundance increases, halibut PSC limits could be unnecessarily constraining. The Council is considering linking PSC limits to halibut abundance to provide a responsive management approach at varying levels of halibut abundance. The Council is considering abundance-based PSC limits to control total halibut mortality, particularly at low levels of abundance. Abundance-based PSC limits also could provide an opportunity for the directed-halibut fishery and protect the halibut spawning stock biomass. The Council recognizes that abundance-based halibut PSC limits may increase and decrease with changes in halibut abundance.

- Halibut PSC limits should be indexed to halibut abundance
- Halibut spawning stock biomass should be protected especially at lower levels of abundance
- There should be flexibility provided to avoid unnecessarily constraining the groundfish fishery particularly when halibut abundance is high
- Provide for directed halibut fishing operations in the Bering Sea.
- Provide for some stability in PSC limits on an inter-annual basis.

The committee will provide their recommendations to the Council as early as possible for consideration by the Council within the alternative set. Once approved by the Council, the scenarios will be provided to the analytical workgroup for inclusion as example scenarios for simulation in the EIS/RIR.

Task 2: The committee may meet to discuss and provide recommendations on appropriate performance metrics for evaluating Council objectives for the analysis. Note the priority for the committee is to develop the scenarios first.

² Per Council discussion in October 2018 and with appropriate accompanying rationale, elements and options and/or management measures outside of the current alternative set may be considered by the committee as necessary.

2. **Membership:** Committee members will be appointed by the Council chairman from members of the public. The committee is intended to include a range of interested stakeholders from both the directed BSAI groundfish and directed Area 4 halibut fisheries. Interested members of the public should submit a letter of interest and brief resume to the Council chairman and Executive Director.
3. **Organization:**
 - The committee chairman will be appointed by the Council Chairman from sitting members of the Council.
 - Council staff for the committee will be designated by the Council Executive Director. Council staff will be available for feedback and clarification but will not be providing additional analyses to the committee.
 - The Committee may recommend and the Council will set meeting agendas.
 - The Committee will report directly to the Council.
4. **Role and responsibility of stakeholder members:** Stakeholders should develop proposed scenarios and performance metrics prior to the committee meeting(s) and discussed and refined during the committee meeting. Council staff will make available previously-developed background information on alternatives and performance metrics.
5. **Public comment:** Opportunity for public comment for each issue will be provided as time allows. The committee chairman will maintain control of public comment opportunities.

Halibut Abundance-based Management (ABM) Stakeholder Committee

AGENDA

Teleconference Thursday, November, 29 2018

10am-12pm

Call-in 907-271-2896

Web address of committee info and docs if applicable

1. Introductions
2. Review Committee Terms of Reference [\[ABM Committee TOR\]](#)
 1. Review of where we are in the process of ABM analysis
 2. Expectations for February Council meeting report from the committee
3. Process for developing strawmen scenarios, measurable objectives and performance metrics for Committee review
 1. Process for selecting scenarios
 2. Background information synthesis to be requested from staff for Committee
 3. Process for developing measurable objectives and performance metrics
4. Meeting dates
 1. In person committee meeting to recommend scenarios
 2. Follow up interim teleconference (as needed)
5. Wrap up
 1. Expectation for December committee report from the Chair

For additional information and if you would like to submit public comment, email diana.stram@noaa.gov