

BSAI Groundfish Sector Progress Report for voluntarily implementing measures to minimize halibut PSC

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Applicability.

BSAI groundfish sectors (American Fisheries Act (AFA) catcher/processors, AFA catcher vessels, Amendment 80, Freezer Longline, Western Alaska Community Development Quota) must submit to the Council a progress report on voluntarily implementing measures in their cooperative and/or inter-cooperative agreements to minimize halibut Prohibited Species Catch (PSC).

Time limits and submittal.

The report must be received during the June 2 - 10, 2014, Council meeting. The report may be provided by electronic or paper submittal, or oral presentation.

Information required.

BSAI Groundfish Sectors must provide to the Council voluntary measures to be implemented in their cooperative and/or inter-cooperative agreements.

- ◆ Development of effective and verifiable measures for halibut avoidance
- ◆ Individual accountability and use of incentives to reduce halibut prohibited species catch (PSC)

Purpose

The purpose of the report is for each sector in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) groundfish fisheries to inform the Council of its progress on voluntary, non-regulatory methods it is using within its fishery cooperative to avoid halibut bycatch in the BSAI groundfish fisheries. The Council is currently considering regulatory revisions to provide additional incentives for the fleet to reduce halibut bycatch in these fisheries, if voluntary measures are deemed insufficient in managing halibut PSC.

In February 2014, the Council received testimony from a number of BSAI groundfish industry participants describing measures their fleets or cooperatives are currently developing or have already undertaken to reduce halibut PSC. The Council would like to gather more information on these measures as it considers how it may best meet its objective to reduce halibut PSC to the extent practicable.

Participants, BSAI Groundfish Sectors

- ◆ AFA Catcher/Processor sector - 1 report
- ◆ AFA Catcher Vessel sector - from 1 to 7 reports (probably likely to do one, combined sector report, but there are 7 cooperatives within the sector)
- ◆ AFA Mothership sector - 1 report
- ◆ Amendment 80 sector - 2 reports

- ◆ Freezer longline sector - 1 report
- ◆ Western Alaska Community Development Quota (CDQ) sector - 1 report

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