

## Comments on Concur's Performance Review of IPHC

By Bernard E. Skud (former Director)

For the most part, my comments concentrate on the report per se, not the specifics of the Findings and Recommendations. I found what I consider "short-comings", but can't tell whether the authors failed to get the information during their "investigation" or decided not to use particular aspects. This is not a problem for the readers who are familiar with IPHC, but raises a question about the completeness of the study and the possible effect on their conclusions.

To me, the tone of the Performance Review is set in footnote 2 (page 5): The use of the term "Commission" refers to the six commissioners that comprise the IPHC. The term "Staff" or "Secretariat" refers to the Commission staff headed by Executive Director Dr. Bruce Leaman. Usually, I can ignore the fact that the preferred usage states "...the whole comprises the parts; the parts do not comprise the whole...", but here, the authors disregard their own instruction and totally confuse the issue by consistently referring to the Commission's work that is executed by the staff and then referring to the staff as synonymous with IPHC. This conception by the authors is the antithesis of the popular impression.

I think the authors could be more forthright. For example, they repeatedly refer to IPHC's "impeccable management" (my quotation marks) and "walk-away" leaving the reader with the same impression, except for a few "challenges", nothing has changed. Essentially, the authors are ignoring their own discussion on the failure to maintain an optimum yield in the current decade. Then too, though mention was made of the low abundance in the 1970's, there was no explanation that the cause was, in part, due to an error in CPUE caused by changes in hook spacing\*\* --- a mistake that took 40 years to correct. As a former Director, I marvel at and am as proud of IPHC's accomplishments as anyone, but I agree with one of the people interviewed by the authors that said "...we're living on our laurels." Despite such remarks, the authors seem to disregard the current decline as well as that of the 1970's and go along with statements that all is well in Mudville. \*\* (There is no mention of hook spacing in the gear section-- page 17 -- far more significant over the years than the effect of J-hooks.)

It is worthwhile noting the makeup of 44 interviews (page 71): IPHC and other govt. people accounted for 44%, recreational about 10%, and processors, trawl fisherman, academia and tribal were all less than 1%. A "commercial" category, which apparently was for halibut (Were any career longliners?). Certainly a questionable distribution...

13 IPHC ( 8 commissioners, 5 staff)  
6 Other Govt.  
7 Commercial (assume halibut, but none identified as longliners)  
5 Recreational  
4 Processors  
3 Trawlers  
3 Academia  
3 Tribal

The Review contains some worthwhile insights, but I am left with the feeling that the authors' comments and recommendations apply to a much larger organization, which is neither feasible nor necessary to fulfill the objectives of the Treaty. I also think the report could have been more useful if it had been edited for correctness and completeness by someone more familiar with IPHC than the authors.

I think the authors of the Concur report were overzealous and should have offered suggestions that were more practical for IPHC. Under the present pressing circumstances, I think the level of communication

with the public and stakeholders is more than adequate, as time is needed to understand what's happening to the stock -- more meetings will only detract from time needed for other matters..

#### MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS

The discussions in the Background and Findings are often repetitive and overlapping,

IPHC itself is best equipped to respond to the recommendations.

I was pleased to see mention of administrative matters.

I would have liked to have ecologists interviewed, for more emphasis on biology than assessment models to help resolve current problems