

*Information Bulletin*

Number 10 April 1975

P.O. Box 95009, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98145-2009

SOAK-TIME AND DEPTH OF FISHING

At this year's annual meeting a group of fishermen recommended a regulation to limit the soak-time of setline gear. Before this proposal is considered for adoption, IPHC needs additional information to fully understand the implications of such a regulation. The average length of soak has changed over the years. In the late 1920's and early 1930's, when fishermen converted from dory to longline gear, soak-time increased markedly. During the last 10 years, fishermen have increased soak-time again, and now soaks of 24 hours are not uncommon. Because detailed information on soak-time is lacking, IPHC plans to study its effect on CPUE and is asking captains to record the setting and hauling time for each string of gear.

Depth of fishing also needs to be considered in our assessment of the stocks. Though halibut move inshore during the summer, precise data on this movement as it relates to depth is not available and is needed to define area that should be protected from foreign trawlers.

In 1972 IPHC distributed new log books to halibut fishermen. Space was provided for recording depth and for setting and hauling times. IPHC asks that these items be recorded in the space provided so that the data can be obtained by Commission representatives along with information on gear, catch and location. Consistent with our past policy, all information from individual vessels will be held in strict confidence, but results of analyses of the combined data will be available to all fishermen.

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