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COMPLETION AND SUBMISSION OF LOGBOOKS FOR THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL HALIBUT AND SABLEFISH FISHERIES

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) has collected logbook information since the 1930s. The weight per unit effort, gear, and location information from the logbook is essential for the annual stock assessment and aids in determining the condition of the halibut resource. We have been successful in managing the halibut resource primarily because of cooperation from participating harvesters. IPHC regulations require the operators of any vessel commercially fishing for halibut, that has an overall length of 26 feet or greater, to maintain a logbook. All detailed trip information obtained and retained by the IPHC is kept strictly confidential and cannot be subpoenaed under IPHC immunities.

The IPHC has been contracted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Auke Bay Laboratory (ABL) to collect sablefish log sheets for use in the sablefish stock assessment. This program was developed at the request of the sablefish industry and is voluntary. Any logbook information provided to the NMFS ABL requires a skipper's signature acknowledging and agreeing to the following: 'IPHC will forward to Sablefish Assessment, Auke Bay Lab'. Only sablefish data that have this acknowledgement are provided to ABL. To meet the IPHC confidentiality requirements, sablefish catch, set data, and landing locations are provided, but each vessel is assigned a unique number code preventing the vessel from being identified. These data cannot be obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

For the 2012 season, we will have samplers in the following ports: in Alaska, Dutch Harbor, Homer, Juneau, Kodiak, Petersburg, Sand Point, Seward, Sitka, and St. Paul; and in Bellingham, Washington and Newport, Oregon.

Providing the log to the port sampler is the most efficient way to provide accurate data for inclusion in the stock assessment, to clarify details, and provides you with a venue to ask questions and provide direct feedback to the IPHC and ABL. If you need a new logbook, one can be obtained from any port sampler or from the Seattle IPHC office. At the end of the fishing season, if a sampler has not collected logbook information from all trips, please tear out the IPHC/IFQ copy from your logbook, or make a copy of the information, sign to release the sablefish catch information, and send it to the Seattle office.

Please refer to the log example to complete your IPHC-approved log as accurately, legibly, and completely as possible. Thank you again for your continuing cooperation.