



5 November 2024

**IPHC CIRCULAR 2024-030**

**SUBJECT: FOR DECISION – FISS 2025 DESIGN**

Dear Commissioners,

In accordance with the IPHC Rules of Procedure (2024), Rule 11 – Decision Making (paragraphs 4-10) shown below, please find at **Appendix I**, the FISS 2025 design (For Decision).

***IPHC Rules of Procedure (2024)***

***Rule 11 – Decision making - Intersessional decision-making***

4. *In case of the need for adoption of an emergency measure between Sessions, or where a decision needs to be taken intersessionally, the Chairperson may propose that a decision be taken by mail, telephone, or electronic communication.*
5. *When a decision is to be taken by electronic means, the Executive Director shall transmit the proposed decision to all Commissioners.*
6. *Commissioners shall promptly acknowledge receipt of any proposed decision by electronic means. If no acknowledgement is received from any particular Commissioner within one week of the date of transmittal, the Executive Director will retransmit the proposed decision, and will use all reasonable means to ensure that it has been received.*
7. *Members shall have **10 days** to respond, unless a longer period is specified by the Executive Director in the transmittal.*
8. *If no reply from a Commissioner reaches the Executive Director within the period established under [Rule 11.7](#), that decision shall be deferred to the next session of the Commission.*
9. *All inter-sessional decisions must be made by consensus.*
10. *The Executive Director shall promptly ascertain and transmit the decision to all Commissioners via an IPHC Circular. The date of that transmittal shall be the 'date of notification'. Such decisions shall be duly recorded in the Commission's records by the Executive Director. Copies of such decisions shall be published with unique Intersessional Decision (ID) numbering on the IPHC website, via an IPHC Circular.*

**Background:**

Ref. IPHC-2024-ID009 – FISS2025 design (attached)

**Intersessional decision required:**

Please provide your decision on the below action no later than **15 November 2024**, in accordance with Rule 11.7 shown above.

**I approve / I do not approve** the following actions:

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2024-ID009 (Appendix I) that seeks approval from the Commission for a 2025 FISS design based on discussions held during the 14<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Commission ([SS014](#); [IPHC-2024-SS014-R](#)).
- 2) **RECOMMEND** the 2025 FISS design as shown in Figure 1 (of Appendix I), involving sampling 517 stations in four (4) biological regions, seven (7) IPHC Regulatory Areas, and ten (10) charter regions.
- 3) **APPROVE** the transfer of US\$1,000,000 from IPHC Fund 50 – Reserve, to IPHC Fund 40 – FISS for use in FY2025.

Yours sincerely



David T. Wilson, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, IPHC

**Appendices:**

**Appendix I:** IPHC-2024-ID009 – FISS 2025 design (For Decision)



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**FISS 2025 design (For Decision)**

**PREPARED BY: IPHC SECRETARIAT (5 NOVEMBER 2024)**

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**PURPOSE**

To seek approval from the Commission for a 2025 FISS design based on discussions held during the 14<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Commission ([SS014](#); [IPHC-2024-SS014-R](#)).

**BACKGROUND**

At the 14<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the IPHC (SS014), the Commission made the following request:

SS014-Req.01 ([para. 5](#)) “The Commission **REQUESTED** the Secretariat provide an intersessional decision paper no later than 7 November 2024, containing the following elements:

- a) A 2025 FISS design the combines Options 2 and 3 from paper [IPHC-2024-SS014-03](#) (Table 3; 2A(1), 2B (1), 2C (1), 3A(2), 3B(2), 4A/4B(1));
- b) A budget deficit for the FISS in FY2025 of approximately US\$1.2 m, while also seeking to reduce FISS costs;
- c) A proposed decision for the Commission on the movement of funds from Fund 50 – Reserve, to Fund 40 – FISS, for FY2025.”

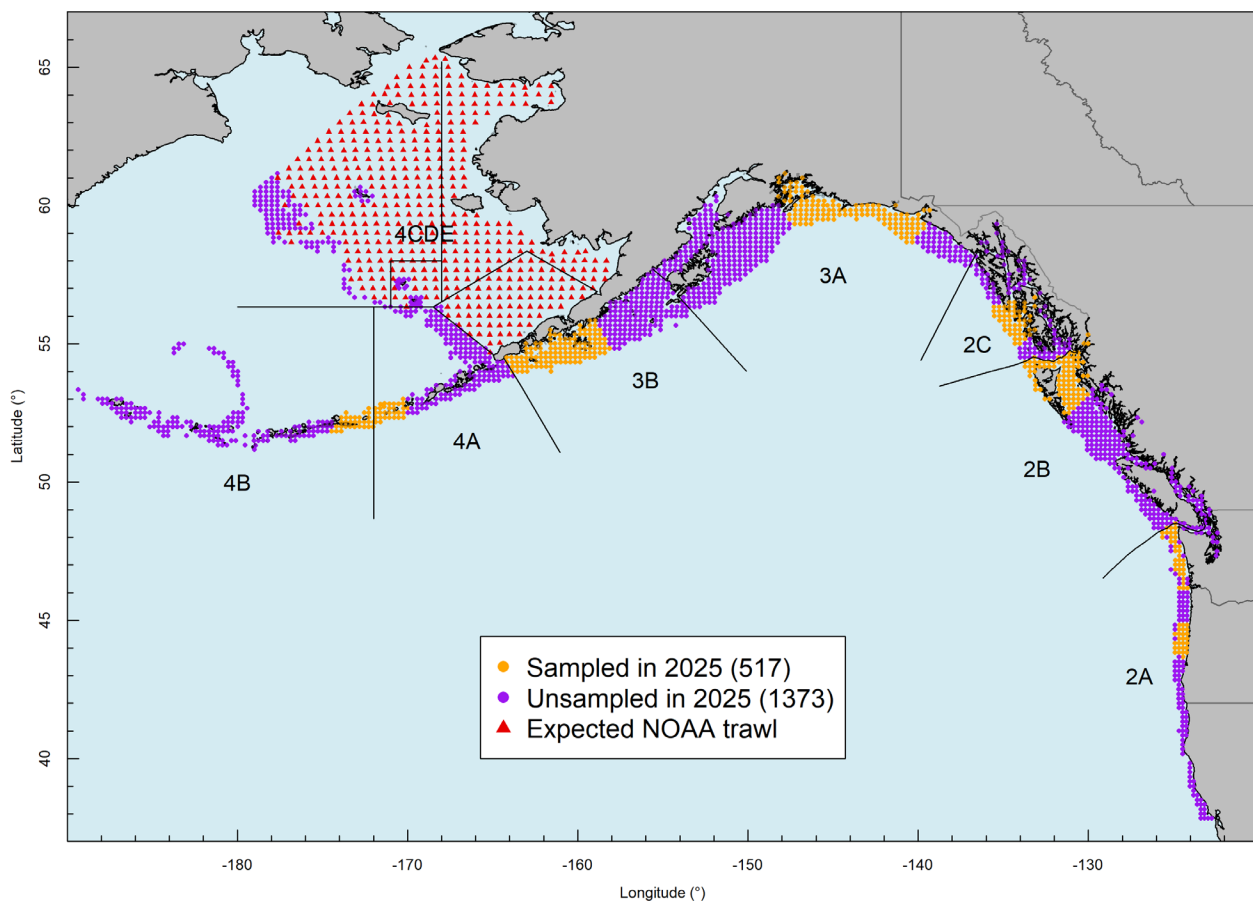
**DISCUSSION**

- Only two charter regions, one each in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2B and 2C, are projected to be revenue-positive in 2025.
- Supplementary funding of US\$387,000 has been made available for sampling 60 stations in each of IPHC Regulatory Areas 4A/4B and IPHC Regulatory Area 2A (these two sets of 60 stations are each considered to be single charter regions when projecting costs).
- NOAA and ADFG trawl surveys are expected to provide information on Pacific halibut density in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4A and 4CDE that will be integrated via the Space-Time Model.
- All stations in IPHC charter regions Trinity (3B) and Albatross (3A) were sampled in 2023 and 2024.
- Nearly all stations in IPHC charter region Prince William Sound were sampled in 2023 and none were sampled in 2024.
- The Yakutat IPHC charter region was not sampled in 2023 or 2024.
- The Yakutat and Prince William Sound IPHC charter regions are higher priority areas than the Albatross IPHC charter region IPHC Regulatory Area 3A because of the potential for high variability and bias if not sampled.
- All stations in IPHC charter region Shumagin were sampled in 2023 and none were sampled in 2024.
- Approximately half of the stations in the IPHC charter region Sanak were sampled in 2023 and none were sampled in 2024.
- The Shumagin and Sanak IPHC charter regions are higher priority areas than the Trinity IPHC charter region in IPHC Regulatory Area 3B because of the potential for high variability and bias if not sampled.

[Table 1](#) and [Figure 1](#) below provide the 2025 FISS design proposed for endorsement. [Table 2](#) provides a breakdown of major sources of income and expenses.

**Table 1.** Summary of the proposed 2025 FISS design by Biological Region, IPHC Regulatory Area, and IPHC Charter Area.

| 2025           | IPHC Regulatory Area | IPHC Charter Area             | Stations (n=517) |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Bio. Region 2  | 2A                   | Washington; Oregon            | 34; 26           |
|                | 2B                   | Charlotte                     | 89               |
|                | 2C                   | Ommaney                       | 52               |
| Bio. Region 3  | 3A                   | Yakutat; Prince William Sound | 64; 67           |
|                | 3B                   | Shumagin; Sanak               | 54; 71           |
| Bio. Region 4  | 4A                   | Unalaska                      | 30               |
| Bio. Region 4B | 4B                   | Adak                          | 30               |



**Figure 1.** FISS design for 2025 that includes four high-priority IPHC charter regions in Biological Region 3, two projected revenue-positive IPHC charter regions in Biological Region 2, and charter regions in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A and 4A/4B covered by supplementary funding.

**Table 2.** Projected net revenue/loss

| 2025   | \$                    | Notes  |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Total Projected Cost</b>                          | <b>US\$2,702,000</b>  | <b>Base HQ costs:</b> US\$528,474 (incurred even if no FISS is conducted)<br><b>Vessel bids:</b> US\$1,103,405<br><b>Field staff:</b> US\$344,833<br><b>Bait estimate:</b> US\$264,000<br><b>Non-IPHC Fish sales:</b> US\$160,330<br><b>Other costs:</b> US\$301,000 |
| Total Projected Revenue                              | US\$1,316,000         | US\$1,261,526 from Pacific halibut sales<br>US\$55,094 from byproduct sales  |
| <b>Sub-Total: 2025 FISS Net Revenue/Loss</b>         | <b>-US\$1,385,000</b> | To be covered by any additional supplementary funding received in-year, and the IPHC Fund 50 (Reserve).  |
| Supplementary Funding (known)                        | US\$387,000           | USA Supplementary Funding (Received) - for sampling in 2A and 4A/4B.   |
| 2025 Trawl Survey staffing                           | US\$60,000            | Placement of one (1) x SSS(F) on a NOAA Trawl survey   |
| Oceanographic monitoring                             | US\$90,000            | Maintenance and deployment of 8 water column profilers   |
| <b>Total: 2025 FISS Net Revenue/Loss</b>             | <b>-US\$1,148,000</b> | To be covered by any additional supplementary funding received in-year, and the IPHC Fund 50 - Reserve.  |
| <b>Transfer of funds from IPHC Fund 50 – Reserve</b> | US\$1,000,000         | Commission decision to transfer funds from 50 – Reserve to 40 – FISS for operational use in 2025.  |

\*Assumptions:

- 1) no bid inflation for 2025 (compared to 2024);
- 2) 5% decline in landings from observed 2024 rates;
- 3) no change in average price.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2024-ID009 that seeks approval from the Commission for a 2025 FISS design based on discussions held during the 14<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Commission ([SS014](#); [IPHC-2024-SS014-R](#)).
- 2) **RECOMMEND** the 2025 FISS design as shown in Figure 1, involving sampling 517 stations in four (4) biological regions, seven (7) IPHC Regulatory Areas, and ten (10) charter regions.
- 3) **APPROVE** the transfer of US\$1,000,000 from IPHC Fund 50 – Reserve, to IPHC Fund 40 – FISS for use in FY2025.

**REFERENCES**

- DeFilippo, L., Kotwicki, S., Barnett, L., Richar, J., Litzow, M.A., Stockhausen, W.T., and Palof, K. 2023. Evaluating the impacts of reduced sampling density in a systematic fisheries-independent survey design. *Frontiers in Marine Science* **10**. doi:10.3389/fmars.2023.1219283.
- Francis, R.I.C.C., Hurst, R.J., and Renwick, J.A. 2003. Quantifying annual variation in catchability for commercial and research fishing. *Fishery Bulletin* **101**: 293-304.
- Stewart, I. and Hicks, A. 2024. Development of the 2024 Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) stock assessment. IPHC-2024-SRB025-06). 12 p.
- Webster, R. A., Stewart, I., Ualesi, K. and Wilson, D. 2024. 2025-29 FISS design evaluation. IPHC-2024-WM2024-10.