

Management Strategy Advisory Board Report

92nd International Pacific Halibut Commission Annual Meeting

Michel Culver, Adam Keizer. Management Strategy Advisory Board co-chairs.

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The Commission approved the formation of the Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB) in 2013 to oversee the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process. Through a formal, stakeholder-driven process the MSAB advises the Commission on the development and evaluation of fishery objectives and strategies for managing the fishery. MSAB membership consists of 24 official and ex-officio members represent interests from the directed commercial fisheries, sport, processing, Tribal/First Nations, and Fisheries Councils and managers.

Greatest value of a Management Strategy Evaluation lies in the process. The MSE process provides the structure and venue for stakeholders to understand, contribute to, and support long-term management. MSAB members have, thanks to the efforts of Commission staff, developed an understanding of MSE concepts, and drafted preliminary fishery objectives and a suite of potential management measures. MSAB members want to see progress continue, and where possible, occur more quickly. To support this, MSAB members recommended governance changes that were adopted at the October 2015 meeting.

Governance changes included the nomination of co-chairs and an agenda setting committee, and hiring a facilitator to support the meeting process. As co-chairs Michel Culver (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Pacific Fishery Management Council) and Adam Keizer (Fisheries and Oceans Canada) are responsible for guiding and advancing the process by identifying key issues and possible avenues of resolution. The co-chairs are also responsible for reporting on the MSAB's decisions and recommendations to the Commission and its advisory bodies. A facilitator has been helpful in managing the meetings by conducting meeting administration (e.g. coordinate agenda setting, meeting minutes), and ensuring that discussions are focused and that meeting objectives are met. The MSAB is supportive of the Commission contracting a facilitator for future MSAB meetings. The facilitator has also submitted an outreach plan ([Outreach Plan for the Pacific Halibut Management Strategy Evaluation](#)) to enhance communication with a broad group of stakeholders. This report will be reviewed in greater detail at the next MSAB meeting.

Previous MSAB meeting discussions and decisions

At the most recent MSAB meeting in October 2015, key discussions and decisions included:

- Reviewed roles and responsibilities of MSAB members, staff, and stakeholders
- Discussed engaging with other stakeholders not currently participating on the MSAB (e.g., non-directed fisheries)

- Reviewed progress to date, and provided recommendations about how to proceed with alternative modelling approaches (coastwide vs. spatial operating model)
- Held breakout sessions with IPHC MSE Tool (<http://shiny.iphc.int/sample-apps/mseapp/>)
 - Intended to build familiarity with the tool and practical application of the evaluation process
- Introduction to the concept of a “Fishery Footprint”
- Review current MSAB outreach activities and a proposed outreach plan
- Endorsed governance changes and MSAB facilitation
- Co-chairs advised to present MSAB developments to the Commission and stakeholders at the Interim and Annual meetings

The outreach plan from the facilitators has identified several challenges, clarified outreach objectives, and proposed a number of communication tools.

Communication challenges

- Diverse and dispersed stakeholders
- Complex material can be difficult to communicate to stakeholders and can inhibit members ability to contribute equally
- Lack of understanding has resulted in a fear that the MSAB may exert a disproportionate amount of influence

Outreach objectives

- Inform stakeholders of MSAB activities and progress in a timely and consistent manner and with the appropriate amount and type of information;
- Gather stakeholder input on MSE issues important to stakeholders and be responsive to this input; and
- Excite stakeholders about the MSE process, stimulate their engagement in the process, and foster positive relationships between the MSAB and stakeholders.

Potential communication tools, to be discussed at the next MSAB meeting, are available in the outreach plan (http://www.iphc.info/MSAB%20Documents/MSAB_OutreachStrategy_FINAL_v1.3.pdf).

Interim and Annual Meeting

The MSAB co-chairs presented a status update at the 2015 Interim Meeting and held sessions at the Annual Meeting with the Conference Board and Processor Advisory Group to debrief and receive comment on MSAB initiatives. Key discussion points provided to the MSAB include:

- Communication from the MSAB to Conference Board and the Processor Advisory Group is important.
 - Agency staff on the MSAB should play a role in disseminating information.

- It would be helpful to identify a Commission staff member as a liaison for Conference Board and the Processor Advisory Group.
- Conference Board members reviewed the preliminary fishery objectives and a suite of potential management measures.
- Conference Board received a high level overview of the IPHC MSE tool as method by which MSAB members can scope potential management measures and trade-offs between measures.
- Some Conference Board members have requested that the MSE process includes a spatial operating model such that area-specific management measures and fishery objectives can be evaluated.
- Some Conference Board members have requested that fishery objectives consider longer (e.g., 10-15 years) timeframes than are presented in the current decision tables (e.g. 1-3 years).
- Some Conference Board members have requested that fishery objectives include stable catch limits around a long-term historical average.
- Some Conference Board members have requested that potential management procedures include a maximum size limit.
- The MSAB also understands that the Conference Board and the Processor Advisory Group may be providing additional recommendations to the Commission through their existing processes regarding the priorities and activities of the MSAB. We appreciate their interest and await their suggestions.

Next MSAB meeting agenda items

In light of recent staffing changes within the Commission, including Dr. Hicks' pending arrival as Quantitative Scientist, the proposed discussion items for the next proposed MSAB meeting in May 2016 are being reviewed. The tentative list includes:

- Review and discuss outreach plan prepared by the facilitator
- Review and discuss draft revisions to MSAB terms of reference
- Draft a revised work plan with new Commission staff
 - Follow up on Conference Board and Processor Advisory Group recommendations