



Halibut-Sablefish Committee Pre-Meeting

October 25, 2023

2:00 – 4:00 PM AKST

Virtual

Approved Minutes (on 11-2-23)

Call to Order

2:05 meeting called to order by Chair, Peggy Parker

Members Present:

Chair Parker, Vice Chair Sullivan , Todd Greenwood, Bob Barnett, Kendall Whitney, Jessica Keplinger, Jim Lagucik, Hank Baumgart, John Jensen

Members Absent:

Jim Hubbard

Quorum was met.

Others Present:

ASMI Program Director & Staff, members of industry.

Approval of Draft Agenda

Greenwood moved to approve, Jensen seconded, none opposed.

Approval of Minutes from November 9, 2022

Lagucik moved to approve, Jensen seconded, none opposed.

Chair Parker read antitrust statement.

No remarks from the chair or vice chair.

Introductions from ASMI Staff and Industry members present.

Old Business

No old business discussed.

New Business

Chair Parker opened discussion on Halibut and started off discussing possibility of lowered quota next year. Vice Chair Sullivan discussed shut downs on buying, challenges with catch, and small sizes.

Chair Parker opened discussion on Sablefish. Vice Chair discussed smaller sizes, Whitney and Greenwood echoed those observations.

Greenwood discussed inventory overseas. Suggested that ASMI should focus on finding a market for smaller fish in domestic market. Greenwood believes Domestic market is more open to sablefish and smaller sized fish. Lagucik agreed.

Will Rogers of Wild Alaskan Program noted that they saw an uptick in sablefish sales after allowing consumers to build their own box, but a lot of education is needed in the domestic market.

Industry member Erik Velsko commented that fish is getting to market and discussed fish catch quotas for different regions. Velsko suggested ASMI work on domestic market because more fish are available.

Keplinger discussed success of value added sablefish products. Noted that there is demand for value added sablefish in certain regions domestically.

Review and discussion of Board's Species Questions for the Halibut-Sablefish Committee

Chair Parker read questions to the committee and asked if committee needs any clarification.

Chair Parker opened discussion on the first question regarding opportunities in the domestic and international markets. Greenwood suggested exploring opportunities for smaller fish in domestic markets. Keplinger suggested looking into opportunities in smaller retailers in US and niche online markets.

Chair Parker opened discussion on the second question regarding technical support for halibut and sablefish. Vice Chair Sullivan asked ASMI Technical Director John Burrows about chalky halibut and puss pockets issues.

Bob Barnett asked if there is something the committee can do to help Technical secure grant funding. John recommended committee wait to see if his program secures the SK grant before discussing other funding options for ASMI research projects.

Chair Parker opened discussion on the third question regarding issues or topics ASMI could help with messaging. Kendall Whitney suggested messaging on carbon footprint.

Chair Parker opened discussion on the fourth question regarding top 3 challenges/threats for halibut and sablefish. Chair Parker notes issues on management, marketing issues with over abundance, low price, and small sizes of sablefish. Chair also suggests expanding domestic and international markets.

Buamgart noted the strong US dollar being a challenge for international markets such as Japan. Whitney echoed Hanks comment and added that the international leads are very helpful. Also noted that the answers to last year's All Hands on Deck questions are still relevant.

Industry member Maddie Lightsey comments on sablefish market and suggested focus on advertising in China and Japan. Discussed lack of awareness and unfamiliarity with sablefish in the US market. Suggests marketing to millennials because it is an easy and nutritious fish to cook.

Keith Singleton discusses success of Alaskan Leader value added sablefish products such as sablefish miso. Singleton notes that small sizes are most concerning aspect for sablefish in the future.

Chair Parker opened discussion on the fifth question regarding resources ASMI could provide to help harvesters. Jensen would like resources on what can be done with small sizes and resources to encourage consumers to try it.

Other Comments

Chair opened the floor for other comments. Keith Singleton discussed importance of Symphony of Seafood and encourages others to get involved. Singleton noted that halibut is often not represented at Symphony of Seafood. Recommends ASMI encourage more industry to join.

Good of the Order

Chair Parker opened the floor for good of the order. No comments.

Adjourn

Jensen moved to adjourn, Keplinger seconded. None opposed. Motion passed.