

TABLE 1.—PROPOSED 2004 ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH (ABC), TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH (TAC), INITIAL TAC (ITAC), CDQ RESERVE ALLOCATION, AND OVERFISHING LEVELS OF GROUND FISH IN THE BERING SEA AND ALEUTIAN ISLANDS AREA (BSAI) ¹—Continued

[All amounts are in metric tons]

Species and area	Overfishing level	ABC	TAC	ITAC ²	CDQ reserve ³
AI	830	706	62
Other rockfish: ⁷					
BS	1,280	960	960	816	72
AI	846	634	634	539	48
Squid: BSAI	2,620	1,970	1,970	1,675
Other species: ⁸ BSAI	81,100	43,300	32,309	27,463	2,423
Total	4,002,858	3,127,003	1,998,443	1,770,482	187,225

¹ These amounts apply to the entire BSAI management area unless otherwise specified. With the exception of pollock, and for the purpose of these specifications, the Bering Sea (BS) subarea includes the Bogoslof District.

² Except for pollock and the portion of the sablefish TAC allocated to hook-and-line and pot gear, 15 percent of each TAC is put into a reserve. The ITAC for each species is the remainder of the TAC after the subtraction of these reserves. The Aleutian Islands (AI) subarea and the Bogoslof District are closed to directed fishing for pollock. The amounts specified are for incidental catch amounts only, and are not apportioned by season, sector or put into a reserve.

³ Except for pollock and the hook-and-line or pot gear allocation of sablefish, one half of the amount of the TACs placed in reserve, or 7.5 percent of the TACs, is designated as a CDQ reserve for use by CDQ participants (see §§ 679.20(b)(1)(iii) and 679.31).

⁴ The American Fisheries Act (AFA), § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(1), requires that 10 percent of the annual pollock TAC be allocated as a directed fishing allowance for the CDQ sector. NMFS then subtracts 3.5 percent of the remainder as an incidental catch allowance for pollock, which is not apportioned by season or area. The remainder of the TAC is further allocated by sector as follows: inshore—50 percent; catcher/processor—40 percent; and motherships—10 percent.

⁵ Regulations at § 679.20(b)(1) do not provide for the establishment of an ITAC for the hook-and-line and pot gear allocation for sablefish. The ITAC for sablefish reflected in Table 1 is for trawl gear only. Twenty percent of the sablefish TAC allocated to hook-and-line gear or pot gear is reserved for use by CDQ participants (see § 679.20(b)(1)(iii)).

⁶ "Other flatfish" includes all flatfish species, except for Pacific halibut (a prohibited species), flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, arrowtooth flounder and Alaska plaice.

⁷ "Other rockfish" includes all *Sebastes* and *Sebastolobus* species except for Pacific ocean perch, northern, shortraker, and rougheye rockfish.

⁸ "Other species" includes sculpins, sharks, skates and octopus. Forage fish, as defined at § 679.2, are not included in the "other species" category.

Reserves and the Incidental Catch Allowance (ICA) for Pollock

Regulations at § 679.20(b)(1)(i) require that 15 percent of the TAC for each target species or species group, except for pollock and the hook-and-line and pot gear allocation of sablefish, be placed in a non-specified reserve. Regulations at § 679.20(b)(1)(iii) require that one half of each TAC amount placed in the non-specified reserve (7.5 percent), with the exception of squid, be allocated to the groundfish CDQ reserve and that 20 percent of the hook-and-line and pot gear allocation of sablefish be allocated to the fixed gear sablefish CDQ reserve. Regulations at § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A) specify how the pollock TAC apportioned to the Bering Sea Subarea, after subtraction of the 10 percent CDQ reserve under § 679.31(a), will be allocated. With the exception of the hook-and-line and pot gear sablefish CDQ reserve, the CDQ reserves are not further apportioned by gear. Regulations at § 679.21(e)(1)(i) also require that 7.5 percent of each PSC limit, with the exception of herring, be withheld as a PSQ reserve for the CDQ fisheries. Regulations governing the management of the CDQ and PSQ reserves are set forth at §§ 679.30 and 679.31.

Under § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(1), NMFS allocates a pollock ICA of 3.5 percent of

the pollock TAC after subtraction of the 10 percent CDQ reserve. This allowance is based on an examination of the incidental catch of pollock in non-pollock target fisheries from 1998 through 2003. During this 6-year period, the incidental catch of pollock ranged from a low of 2 percent in 2003, to a high of 5 percent in 1999, with a 6-year average of 3 percent. Because these incidental percentages are contingent on the relative amounts of other groundfish TACs, NMFS will be better able to assess the ICA amount when the Council makes final ABC and TAC amount recommendations in December.

The remainder of the non-specified reserve is not designated by species or species group, and any amount of the reserve may be reapportioned to a target species or the "other species" category during the year, providing that such reapportionments do not result in overfishing, see § 679.20(b)(1)(ii).

Pollock Allocations Under the American Fisheries Act (AFA)

Regulations at § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(1) require that 10 percent of the BSAI pollock TAC be allocated as a directed fishing allowance to the CDQ program. The remainder of the BSAI pollock TAC, after the subtraction of an allowance for the incidental catch of pollock by vessels, including CDQ

vessels, harvesting other groundfish species, is allocated as follows: 50 percent to catcher vessels harvesting pollock for processing by the inshore component, 40 percent to catcher/processors and catcher vessels harvesting pollock for processing by catcher/processors in the offshore component, and 10 percent to catcher vessels harvesting pollock for processing by motherships in the offshore component. These proposed amounts are listed in Table 2.

The AFA also contains several specific requirements concerning pollock and pollock allocations under § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(4). First, 8.5 percent of the pollock allocated to the offshore AFA catcher/processor sector will be available for harvest by AFA catcher vessels with offshore sector endorsements, unless the Regional Administrator receives a cooperative contract that provides for the distribution of harvest between catcher/processors and catcher vessels in a manner agreed to by all members. Second, AFA catcher/processors not listed in the AFA are limited to harvesting not more than 0.5 percent of the pollock allocated to the catcher/processor sector. Table 2 lists the proposed 2004 allocations of pollock TAC as prescribed by the AFA. Other provisions of the AFA, including