

Port Clyde Sector

October 12, 2011

Answers to Council Questions regarding Sector Operation

A quick note: These answers are based on the running of the sector in FY 2011 as I was not sector manager in FY 2010

1. What ran smoothly in your sector?

- Business planning took a major step forward this year
- The movement of fish both internally and externally went smoother as the year went on
- Reporting
- Communication with NMFS staff
- Dockside and at-sea monitoring

2. What are the top five problems your sector encountered that impeded operations from running smoothly?

- At the beginning of the year we were faced with not only getting the sector running for this year, but also fixing all the data from last year. There were many inaccurate landings from dealers and on top of that there were a number of issues with the steps that the Agency took to either rectify this data. We also had many issues with imputed data and changes to that data throughout the process that it made it quite difficult to make any real progress.
- Not being able to track VTRs once they are in the system. For small vessel operations doing VTRs is a pain and often results in mistakes. Any VTR with a mistake is listed as not ever having been received by the Agency and we cannot tell, as a sector manager what is the matter with that VTR or if it was even sent it. If a manager is supposed to manager we need the tools to do so. We were told this would be fixed after month one, it is not almost November and we are no closer to solving these problems.
- The sector end of the year report: this was another drawn out affair with multiple parts and massive problems associated with it. At one point we had to wait on NMFS for data to complete part II to the end of year report and then they dropped it on us with no warning and gave us 7 days to complete the report. The sector system cannot function like this.
- Mid-Season NMFS Decisions Requiring Sector Database Revisions
- Changes made to reports/specs after the beginning of the fishing year.

3. What potential modifications to the FMP do you think would be helpful for sector operations?

- Elimination of the requirement that sectors pay for ASM. Sectors have not achieved a level of profitability that will allow them to fund an ASM program and new, more flexible regulations need to be put into place to allow this to happen. We need a set of standards that an operating plan should meet. Not simply “this is what a previous system did so the new one should do that as well”. Figure out what data we need and let us figure out how to get you the data.
- Approval of Electronic Monitoring as an at-sea monitoring tool.
- Removal of the size restrictions on landed fish. Obviously we do not want people targeting small fish, but the market will control that and we need an option for full retention, plus electronic monitoring, plus an audit system to make running this fishery affordable. This will give us better data for our stock assessments and put even more pressure on the fishermen to avoid small fish.