

Small Entity Compliance Guide for Tagged Halibut and Sablefish

Does this rule apply to me?

This rule applies to commercial fishermen using hook-and-line gear and who fish under the individual fishing quota (IFQ) program and to Community Development Quota (CDQ) groups. If you catch and land an externally tagged halibut or sablefish, it will not be counted against your IFQ or CDQ account. This is the principal effect of regulations published on June 27, 2006 (71 FR 36489).

As a commercial fisherman, what do I need to do to comply with this new rule?

This rule is intended to enhance the incentive for you to keep, land, and report halibut or sablefish that have an obvious tag attached to them. You are not required to do anything new or different by this new regulation. Instead it simply provides you with an added incentive to land tagged halibut and sablefish which may yield valuable scientific data.

The following provides additional information on reporting tagged halibut and sablefish.

Tagged Halibut

A news release has been published by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) concerning its Pop-up Archival Transmitting (PAT) tagging of halibut throughout the northeast Pacific Ocean. A written description and photos of the satellite pop-up tags and instructions on what to do when a halibut with a PAT tag (or just the leader) is caught can be found at the following website:

<http://www.iphc.washington.edu/halcom/newsrel/2006/nr20060601.htm>

News releases describing how to return halibut “spaghetti” tags to the IPHC can be found at:

<http://www.iphc.washington.edu/halcom/newsrel/2003/nr20030909.htm>

<http://www.iphc.washington.edu/halcom/newsrel/1995/nr950418.htm> and

<http://www.iphc.washington.edu/halcom/faqs.htm#tag>

Tagged Sablefish

The NMFS Auke Bay Laboratory (ABL) has tagged and released over 338,000 sablefish in Alaska waters between 1978 and 2006. About 27,000 tags have been returned with catch information. Individuals who return the 3-inch-long yellow tags with catch location, depth, and date receive a letter with the history of their fish and a baseball cap or T-shirt as reward. In addition, for each tag returned they receive a chance in the annual cash prize drawing for prizes of \$1000, \$500, and \$250. Postage-paid envelopes are available at many fish processing facilities around the state and will be sent to individuals on request. Recovered tags should be mailed to:

Sablefish Tag Program
NOAA/NMFS Auke Bay Laboratory
11305 Glacier Hwy
Juneau, AK 99801



Small Entity Compliance Guide: NMFS has provided this Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996, which requires this rule. This synopsis provides a general overview as a public service.

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For exact regulatory language, please refer to the final rule.