

INPFC
DOCUMENT
Ser. No. 1921
Rev. No.
.....

FOREIGN FISHING OFF THE UNITED STATES,
OCTOBER 1975 - SEPTEMBER 1976



Submitted to the
INTERNATIONAL NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION
by the U.S. NATIONAL SECTION

National Marine Fisheries Service
Northwest Regional Office, Seattle
Alaska Regional Office, Juneau

October 1976

BERING SEA

U.S.S.R.

Soviet fisheries in the Bering Sea from October 1975 through September 1976 was comprised of a groundfish trawl fishery along the Continental Shelf edge in the eastern and central Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. In 1976, as in the previous four years, the Soviets did not fish for crabs in the eastern Bering Sea.

Herring Fishery

The Soviet herring expedition was more of an incidental than a directed fishery. It began in February 1976 and involved 33 vessels that were also fishing for pollock. The fleet increased to 39 ships in late February and remained at that level. In mid-April the herring expedition ended as the fleet's catches became predominantly pollock. In 1976 the herring expedition was about two months shorter and began two months later than in 1975. It is estimated that the 1976 herring expedition took between 7,000 and 10,000 metric tons, only half as much as the previous season.

Groundfish Fishery

The Soviet fishery for groundfish along the Continental Shelf edge was conducted primarily in three areas; (1) in the eastern Bering Sea north of the Fox Islands in the eastern Aleutians, (2) in the central Bering Sea northwest of the Pribilof Islands and (3) north and south of the western Aleutian Islands. The principal species taken were arrowtooth flounder, sablefish, rockfish, Atka mackerel and pollock in the Aleutian areas and the eastern Bering Sea, while pollock were taken in the central Bering Sea.

The number of vessels present simultaneously in the groundfish fishery ranged from 22 to 141. The peak months were February, March, April, May,

July, and August, averaging 88 vessels. October, November, December, January, and June, averaged 43 vessels while only 22 vessels fished in September.

It is estimated that the groundfish catch, including herring, during the period was about 276,360 metric tons.

South Korea

South Korean fishing in the Bering Sea during October 1976 - September 1976 involved a major groundfish trawl fishery primarily for pollock by one factory vessel and independent stern trawlers.

Groundfish Fishery

South Korean trawling for groundfish in the Bering Sea was initiated by an independent stern trawler in late November which operated along the Continental Shelf edge south of the Fox Islands in the eastern Aleutian Islands. It departed Alaskan waters in January. Two stern trawlers began operating north of the Fox Islands in the eastern Aleutians during April. By mid-May two more stern trawlers arrived and they divided their effort north and south of the Fox Islands.

At the end of May a factory vessel arrived with 29 catcher vessels and began operating in the eastern Bering Sea north of the Fox Islands. Each month it moved northwest along the 100-fathom curve until August, at which time it was northwest of the Pribilof Islands. During September the fleet began slowly returning southeast back down the 100-fathom curve. At least five large stern trawlers that were attached to the factory vessel operated as scout vessels and moved independently of the fleet. On occasions fishing south of the Fox Islands and for one brief period in the Gulf of Alaska before returning to the Bering Sea. The vessels which operated in the Bering Sea during 1976 were targeting on pollock.

It was estimated that the catch totaled approximately 82,000 metric tons.

Taiwan

The Republic of China or Taiwan renewed its groundfish effort in 1976 with an independent stern trawler which fished for groundfish in the central and eastern Bering Sea.

Groundfish Fishery

A Taiwanese stern trawler initiated a groundfish fishery in the eastern Bering Sea in February 1976. It continued fishing till late March and departed, returning in mid-May till July, when it shifted to the Gulf of Alaska and returned to the Bering Sea in August. It departed at the end of August and did not return for the remainder of the period. The vessel fished primarily west and southwest of the Pribilof Islands along the Continental Shelf edge. It is believed that the stern trawler was targeting on pollock but took a variety of groundfish species.

It is estimated that the Taiwanese groundfish catch in the Bering Sea totaled approximately 1,400 metric tons.

GULF OF ALASKA

U.S.S.R.

Soviet fishing in the Gulf of Alaska during October 1975 - September 1976 was limited to a trawl fishery for groundfish. The Soviets did not fish for shrimp in the Gulf of Alaska in 1976, for the second year since their annual fishery began in 1964.

Groundfish Fishery

Soviet trawling for groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska was primarily by stern trawlers concentrated mainly along the Continental Shelf edge off Albatross and Portlock Banks near Kodiak Island with a lesser effort in the

western and southeastern Gulf. During October, November, January, February, June and August approximately three vessels fished near Chirikof, Sanak and the Shumagin Islands in the western Gulf of Alaska. During November, December, February, March and April, between five and ten ships operated near Kayak and Middleton Islands in the central Gulf of Alaska. During March, April, and May, approximately three vessels fished off of southeastern Alaska. Principal species taken in the Gulf of Alaska were rockfish, pollock and Atka mackerel.

It is estimated that the Soviet groundfish catch in the Gulf of Alaska during the period totaled between 60,000 and 65,000 metric tons.

South Korea

South Korean fishing in the Gulf of Alaska in 1976 included a trawl fishery for groundfish and a longline fishery for sablefish.

Groundfish Trawl Fishery

South Korean trawling in the Gulf of Alaska was by one vessel that operated in the western Gulf south of Sanak Island and only operated during the months of October and November. No other trawlers operated in the Gulf until the beginning of May, at which time two stern trawlers began fishing in the western Gulf south of Unimak Island. These two stern trawlers were joined by 17 other stern trawlers by the end of June, five of which vessels were from a factory ship that was fishing in the Bering Sea. The majority of the vessels returned to the Bering Sea at the beginning of July, and only seven vessels remained to fish through the middle of August.

It is estimated that the South Korean trawl catch in the Gulf of Alaska totaled 16,000 and 17,000 metric tons, primarily rockfish, sablefish and pollock.

Longline Fishery

South Korean longline fishing for sablefish in the Gulf of Alaska did not begin until January when one longliner began fishing off southeastern Alaska. In February it was joined by two vessels, one fishing south of Kodiak Island and continued at this level until the end of June when the vessels increased to six and continued at this level thru the remainder of the period, concentrating most of their effort in the eastern Gulf along southeastern Alaska.

It is estimated that the South Korean longline catch in the Gulf of Alaska totaled between 1,500 and 2,000 metric tons, primarily sablefish.

Poland

Poland did not engage in any fisheries during this period in the Alaskan area during 1976. Poland entered the fisheries off Alaska in late 1974 with a groundfish fishery in the Gulf of Alaska. This followed a brief exploratory cruise in 1973 by a stern trawler in the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea.

Groundfish Fishery

An independent stern trawler initiated the Polish fishery off Alaska in late December 1974. The vessel fished mainly in the eastern Gulf of Alaska between Yakutat and Kayak Island until mid-January when it was joined by a sister ship and they shifted to Albatross Bank south of Kodiak Island. The first stern trawler was replaced by a third stern trawler in late January. Those two trawlers remained on Albatross Bank until departing the Alaskan area in late February.

The trawlers targeted on Pacific cod but also took a variety of other groundfish species.

It is estimated that the Polish catch off Alaska totaled 3,500 to 4,000 metric tons in 1975.

Taiwan

The Republic of China or Taiwan fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska in 1976 included a trawl fishery for groundfish and a longline fishery for sablefish. Taiwan began a longline fishery for sablefish using a single vessel in the Gulf of Alaska in 1975. This increased to five different vessels by late 1976.

Sablefish Fishery

A Taiwanese longline vessel, converted from tuna fishing, initiated a sablefish fishery in the Gulf of Alaska in late August. The vessel fished a few days in the western Gulf of Alaska and then moved to southeastern Alaska in early September. The vessel was seized on September 9 for violating the United States contiguous fishery zone and after its release on October 22 continued fishing off southeastern Alaska until December, when it departed Alaskan waters. In May one longliner returned and began fishing off the southeastern coast. In mid-June a second longliner arrived and in mid-August three vessels operated off the southeastern coast increasing to four by late September. A total of five different longline vessels have fished off southeastern Alaska.

It is estimated the Taiwanese longline catch in the Gulf of Alaska totaled between 600 and 700 metric tons, primarily sablefish.

Groundfish Fishery

Taiwan began a trawl fishery for groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska by one trawler that fished during the month of July. This vessel had been fishing in the Bering Sea and returned to the Bering Sea.

It is estimated the Taiwanese trawl catch in the Gulf of Alaska totaled 800 metric tons.

WASHINGTON - CALIFORNIA^{1/}U.S.S.R.

During August 1975, the Soviet hake fishery off the Pacific Coast consisted of forty-eight (48) stern trawlers, eight (8) support vessels and one (1) research vessel. Fishing activity was primarily along the coast of Oregon, but limited fishing did occur off northern California. The Soviet hake fishery terminated in late August, and the only Soviet activity for the remainder of the year was a research vessel involved in cooperative research along the Pacific Coast in September.

The Soviet hake fishery in 1976 began the second week of March off central California. Gradually working north through April and May, the fleet, by June, had grown to eighty-nine (89) vessels (72 stern trawlers, 9 transports, 1 tanker and 7 support vessels) operating along the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California. In July and August the Soviet fleet decreased to seventy-one (71) vessels (55 stern trawlers, 10 transports, 1 tanker, 1 tug, 1 research vessel, and 3 patrol vessels) and in September, the fleet decreased further to thirty (30) stern trawlers, three (3) transports, two (2) support vessels and one (1) research vessel. The Soviet hake fishery was reportedly to terminate by the end of the month.

Poland

Ten (10) Polish stern trawlers and two (2) transport vessels operated in the hake fishery from northern California to central Oregon in August 1975. In September, this effort increased to twelve (12) stern trawlers. The Polish hake fishery began to decline in October and was terminated by the end of November.

^{1/} The reporting period for this area has been changed from August-July to October-September. In order to provide continuity, this report also contains information for August-September 1975.

In accordance with the 1976 United States-Poland Bilateral Agreement, the Polish hake fishery did not begin until June. Four (4) stern trawlers entered the fishery off California and gradually moved north into Oregon waters with occasional trips to fish off central Washington. The maximum number of stern trawlers allowed under the Bilateral, seven (7), was reached in August. Two (2) transport vessels (including one (1) of French registry), provided support for the Polish fleet. In September the seven (7) stern trawlers continued to fish. Two (2) transports were with the fleet. One (1) of the transports was of Denmark registry.

The quota of 26,00 metric tons of hake was reached by late September and the Polish fleet was asked to leave the area.

East Germany

During August 1975, two (2) East German stern trawlers fished hake off the Pacific Coast, remaining primarily in the area of Heceta Banks through November. In December, both vessels entered the herring fishery off northern Washington, the departed the coast by mid-January.

In late June 1976, one (1) East German stern trawler returned to the hake fishery off northern California. In July this effort expanded to three (3) trawlers and one (1) transport, moving northward to off southern and central Oregon. In August the fleet increased to four (4) stern trawlers, one (1) transport, and one (1) tanker. Early September found an East German fleet of five (5) stern trawlers and one (1) tanker off Oregon and central Washington.

Bulgaria

In May 1976, Bulgaria entered the Pacific hake fishery for the first time with the arrival of three (3) stern trawlers off Humboldt Bay, California. The vessels remained in this area through June, then moved northward to central

Oregon. A Bulgarian transport arrived on Heceta Bank in July. The trawlers continued fishing off central Oregon through August. In September the Bulgarian fleet expanded to five (5) stern trawlers and one (1) transport off the Oregon and Washington coasts.

Japan

In August 1975, two (2) Japanese stern trawlers fished off the Pacific Coast, with their fishery divided between central Oregon and northern California and one (1) Japanese Government patrol vessel was observed off the coast of Washington. In October their activity was reduced to a single (1) stern trawler off northern Washington. In November a (1) longliner fished black cod off northern Washington and by late December, four (4) longline vessels fished along the Washington Coast. In January 1976, three (3) of the vessels remained off the coast of Washington and one (1) moved south to off Cape Mendocino, California. By February, the Japanese effort decreased to one (1) longline vessel off Cape Mendocino and terminated by the end of the month.

Japan resumed trawl fishing operations off the Pacific Coast in July 1976 when two (2) stern trawlers fished off Oregon and California. Both fished off the Pacific Coast until September when the effort was reduced to one.

Taiwan

During mid-December 1975, two (2) longline vessels entered the black cod fishery for the first time off the coast of Washington and during January 1976 one (1) of these longline vessels moved south to fish off Oregon. In February, the two (2) fishing vessels were again fishing off Washington until departing in mid-month. In March one (1) vessel returned to fish off of northern Washington until mid-May when the Taiwanese longline fishing activity

ceased. There has been no reported activity off the Washington-Oregon-California coast since then.

South Korea

Including vessels registered in Panama but licensed and operated by South Korea.

In August 1975, South Korea had six (6) longline fishing vessels and two (2) transports off the Pacific Northwest Coast. Most of the effort was off the Washington Coast with some fishing occurring off the Oregon Coast. September had the same number of fishing vessels but a decrease to one (1) transport. Effort increased to a high of seven (7) longline and pot vessels in October and November with one (1) pot fishing vessel off the coast of California. In December, the number of vessels decreased to five (5) with effort divided between Oregon and Washington coastal waters.

In January, eight (8) South Korean longline vessels fished black cod primarily off Oregon. Fishing effort increased in February to thirteen (13) longline and pot vessels and one (1) transport off the coasts of Oregon and Washington. This effort decreased to ten (10) fishing vessels and two (2) transports in March. Two (2) vessels were off California, two (2) vessels off northern Washington, with the remaining off of Oregon. Their fishing effort increased to twelve (12) fishing vessels and one (1) transport in April from Cape Flattery, Washington, south to Redding Rock, California. The twelve (12) fishing vessels remained in May increasing to fourteen (14) fishing vessels and two (2) transport vessels in June. July found another increase of vessels to fifteen (15) fishing vessels and three (3) transports in a fishery that extended from Cape Flattery to San Luis Obispo. August had a decrease of vessels to fourteen (14) fishing vessels with a further decrease of effort to eight (8) fishing vessels and one (1) transport in September.

Canada

During July and August 1976 a Canadian stern trawler reportedly fishing for hake was observed off the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California.