



NOAA FISHERIES

Sustainable Fisheries

To Find More Information:

For more detailed information on the Observer Program, Observer Program regulations, please visit: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/>.

For questions about observer coverage or inseason management of the CDQ fisheries, contact Steve Whitney, at 907-586-7269.

Observer Coverage in Community Development Quota (CDQ) Fisheries

Observer coverage requirements for vessels participating in the groundfish and halibut CDQ fisheries are structured to comply with section 305(i)(1)(B)(iv) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), which requires that the harvest of allocations under the CDQ Program for fisheries with individual fishing quotas (IFQs) or fishing cooperatives shall be regulated no more restrictively than for other participants in the applicable non-CDQ sector. The CDQ fisheries covered by the “regulation of harvest” provisions of the MSA are (1) halibut and fixed gear sablefish, (2) pollock, (3) catcher/processors using trawl gear for groundfish species other than pollock, and (4) catcher/processors using hook-and-line gear for any groundfish species other than sablefish.

Observer coverage requirements for vessels *halibut CDQ fishing and fixed gear sablefish CDQ fishing* are the same as requirements that apply for the halibut and fixed gear sablefish IFQ Programs. Catcher/processors are in the full coverage category¹, and catcher vessels are in the partial coverage category.

Observer coverage requirements for *vessels pollock CDQ fishing* are the same as the requirements that apply to vessels directed fishing for pollock in the Bering Sea under the American Fisheries Act (AFA). Catcher/processors, motherships, and catcher vessels are in the full coverage category.

Observer coverage requirements *for catcher/processors using trawl gear in the CDQ fisheries for species other than pollock* are the same as the requirements that apply to the “non-AFA trawl catcher/processors” under the Amendment 80 Program. These catcher/processors are in the full coverage category.

Observer coverage requirements for *catcher/processors using hook-and-line gear in the CDQ fisheries for species other than sablefish* are the same as the requirements that apply to these catcher/processors while fishing for Pacific cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) management area. Vessel owners are required to select between two monitoring options: carry two observers or carry one observer and use a motion-compensated scale to weigh Pacific cod before it is processed.

The only remaining vessel categories in the CDQ fisheries that are not covered by the “regulation of harvest” provision of the MSA are *catcher vessels participating in CDQ fisheries for groundfish other than fixed gear sablefish or pollock*. Under the new Observer Program, the full coverage category is applied to vessels participating in programs with transferable prohibited species catch (PSC) limits, and the CDQ Program is one of these programs. Catcher vessels using hook-and-line gear or trawl gear to fish for groundfish CDQ species other than sablefish or pollock are in the full coverage category because their PSC accrues against the CDQ group’s transferable

¹ Unless these catcher/processors are placed in the partial coverage category based on the “small catcher/processor allowance” in 50 CFR part 679.51(a)(2).

PSC allocations. Catcher vessels using pot or jig gear to fish for groundfish CDQ species other than sablefish are in the partial observer coverage category because halibut PSC by these vessels does not accrue against the CDQ group’s transferable halibut PSC allocation.

The table below summarizes the observer coverage requirements for vessels participating in the groundfish and halibut CDQ fisheries.

Observer coverage requirements for vessels participating in the groundfish and halibut CDQ fisheries.

Fishery or vessel category	Catcher Vessels using:			Catcher/processors	Motherships
	Trawl gear	Hook-and-line gear	Pot or jig gear		
Halibut CDQ	n/a	partial	n/a	full	n/a
Sablefish CDQ	full	partial	partial	full	n/a
Pollock CDQ	full	n/a	n/a	full	full
Other Groundfish CDQ	full	full	partial	full	full

Full = full coverage; partial = partial coverage; n/a = not applicable. For more information on the definition of observer coverage categories see: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/overview.pdf>