

# Species Fact Sheet:

## Rex sole



\*MSC certified May 2010

- **Latin Name:** *Glyptocephalus zachirus*
- **Market/vernacular names:** sole, longfinned or witch sole
- **Location:** Gulf of Alaska (GOA)
- **Fishing Gear:** Bering Sea flatfish gear. This modified gear principally uses sweeps raised off the seafloor by bobbins spaced at 30 meter intervals to herd flatfish into relatively small nets where the fish are captured. Research by NMFS scientists has shown that use of elevated sweeps dramatically reduces effects of fishing on seafloor habitat and associated species such as crab and structure-forming animals called epifauna. This gear will be required for all BSAI flatfish fishing in 2011 and is currently being used voluntarily in the GOA.
- **Season:** January 20 - December 31.
- **Catch/TAC:** 2014 catch = 3,577 metric tons / 2015 TAC = 9,155 metric tons
- **Products:** Whole round
- **Size:** Length to 61 cm. GOA: 300-800 grams whole round (M, L, 2L products)BSAI: 600-1300 grams whole round (L, 2L, 3L, 4L products)
- **General Information:** Rex sole in the GOA are primarily caught in a directed fishery. Fishing seasons are driven by seasonal halibut prohibited species cap apportionments, with approximately seven months of fishing occurring between January and November. Catches of rex sole occur primarily in the Western and Central management areas in the GOA (statistical areas 610 and 620 + 630, respectively). Rex sole is harvested by a combination of catcher vessels and catcher processors in the GOA. Catcher processors harvest multiple species, conduct primary processing aboard the vessel, and freeze their products on board. Catcher vessels exclusively deliver to shoreside processors.
- **Management:** In 1976, the U.S. established management for rex sole stocks out to 200 miles. Federal fishery management plans, adopted through an open and transparent public process and based on sound science, govern the harvest of rex sole. The plans have been amended numerous times to achieve continuous improvement in the performance of the fishery. Fishery managers and scientists follow a precautionary, ecosystem-based approach.
- **Improvements:** Industry participants have worked with NMFS scientists to develop Bering Sea flatfish gear. Research by NMFS scientists has shown that use of this gear, which incorporates elevated sweeps, dramatically reduces effects of fishing on seafloor habitat and associated species such as crab and structure-forming animals called epifauna.

