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Depending on the economics and the productivity, many fisheries manage to survive another year of fishing.

Council sets 1988 catch limits

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for the Tundra Times

Domestic and joint venture fisheries in the Bering Sea, the Gulf of Alaska and around the Aleutian Chain received next year's catch limits from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council last week.

The domestic processors were given about 45 percent of the available catch limit for next fishing season, said Jim H. Branson, executive director of the council. The apportionment is about 25 percent larger than that given to domestic processors last year.

The council met from Dec. 8-11 in Anchorage to hear public testimony on domestic processor and joint venture

needs for 1988 as well as setting the initial apportionments to start the new fishing year which begins Jan. 1.

According to Branson, next year's allocations are similar to those of last year, except for the increase in domestic processing allocations.

The change is a result of more Alaskan fisheries becoming interested in Alaska's lucrative groundfish harvesting, Branson said.

According to Ron Miller, special advisor for the management council, when the allocations are made, the domestic fisheries have priority in catch limits. Whatever is left over is then available to the joint venture processors, he said.

The council decided not to increase the optimum yield range for the Bering Sea and Aleutian groundfish complex which will remain at 2,000,000 metric tons.

Last September, the council adopted a Statement of Commitment which was intended to provide alternatives to better manage the groundfish resources off Alaska. They intend to implement the new system by 1990.

An industry workgroup has been working on those alternatives and gave their progress report to the council last week.

The council also chose new Advisory Panel members at the four-day meeting. The names will be released this week.