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## RE: C6 Pelagic Trawl Gear Definition – Initial Review

Chair Drobica and Council members, The time has come to define pelagic trawl. For far too long the industry has sold itself on pelagic trawl being off the bottom or very limited contact. This is not the case and it falls on the Council to set a criteria that defines pelagic trawl and has enforceable standards to go along with the definition. Please do so. From the public's perspective this seems simple: If trawl gear is making bottom contact, it is bottom trawling. If the trawl gear is not making bottom contact it is pelagic trawling. The State of Alaska does not allow bottom contact within 3 miles of the shoreline with a few exceptions. Why then are trawlers allowed to fish within 3 miles? without a definition what are they doing? little bit on the bottom or a lot? The public deserves to know. These details matter. Our understanding of bottom contact is critical in understanding the effects in closed areas and essential fish habitat. Again the need for a definition and enforceable guidelines. Please do so. Lastly without a clear definition and enforceable guidelines all trawl should be considered NON PELAGIC and treated as such. Alexis Kwachka