GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON THE
FOURTH TIER FOR THE LIMITED ENTRY SABLEFISH DAILY-TRIP LIMIT FISHERY

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) held a lengthy discussion on a proposal to eliminate the limited entry sablefish daily-trip-limit (DTL) fishery and establish a fourth tier of endorsed sablefish permits.

While the GAP recognizes that elimination of the DTL fishery for limited entry permit holders would reduce discards and high-grading in this fishery, it would still allow fourth tier fishermen to participate in the open access DTL fishery once their regular season fishery was concluded. Since similar discard and high-grading problems presumably exist in the open access DTL fishery, the GAP does not believe that discards will actually be reduced.

In addition, it is unclear how many fishermen would be affected by this proposal, whether the economic effects would be positive or negative, or whether the proposal would have negative effects on other species or other fishermen. In short, too little data exists to properly examine the potential effects of this proposal.

Finally, the GAP notes that gathering the necessary data and examining biological and economic impacts would require an excessive amount of work for Council staff and committees at a time when higher priority issues need to be resolved.

Therefore, the GAP cannot recommend at this time the proposal be given consideration by the Council.

PFMC
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