

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT
ON CONSIDERATION OF INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) discussed potential inseason adjustments for the remainder of the 2006 season and the beginning of the 2007 season and has the following recommendations and comments.

2006 Season

Petrale Sole

With regard to Petrale sole the GAP recommends no change to current management measures. The GAP believes that the current harvest rates and anticipated behavior over the last period of the season will keep the Petrale harvest within specified limits.

2007 Season

Sablefish

The GAP recommends changes to the open access sablefish fishery north of 36 degrees for the beginning of 2007 as follows: decrease from 3,000 to 2,100 per 2 months and one 700 pound landing per week. Daily limit is 300 pounds. The daily trip limits (DTL) fishery optimum yield (OY) will be reduced by 1/3 next year and the increased effort expected in the northern management area under the higher limits could result in significant catches during the first few months of the season. Because the Council will not have an opportunity to take action until the March Council meeting, the GAP fears that a reasonable fishery for the remainder of the year may not be possible.

For south of 36 degrees, the GAP recommends for the open access and limited entry DTL fisheries a 300 lb/day, 700 lb landing per week with no cumulative cap.

Canary Rockfish

The GAP heard a report from the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) about the need to balance the scorecard with the new canary rockfish research catch, which is higher than previously projected. Our understanding is that this higher projection is due to the unexpectedly large research catches of canary in 2006. In order to balance the scorecard for 2007 to stay within the canary rockfish OY, reductions are necessary to projected catches in commercial and recreational fisheries. The GAP discussed the GMT's proposed across-the-board reductions and while it may appear "fair" on the surface, realizes that in essence, it is an unreasonable approach. Several fisheries have already endured severe cuts to accommodate other fisheries and for these same fisheries to now take additional cuts on an equal basis with all other sectors the GAP believes is excessive.

The GMT asked the GAP for suggestions about where additional savings may come from. GAP members were reluctant to sit at the table and cut the throats of their neighbors in other sectors. We are upset at being put into this position once again and are unwilling to argue for each other's demise. The situation is so dire that the GAP actually discussed the possibility of eliminating research knowing full well that we will never get out of our current dilemma without continued research. There are obvious trade-offs to be made. By reducing anticipated catch by as much as 10% across the board, several fisheries will suffer such significant hardship that recreational and

commercial infrastructure could cease to exist. These cuts will be made in order to facilitate research. The same research that will eventually get us out of the management box we are in. However, by the time management and science catch up to each other, there may no longer be fishermen to prosecute these fisheries. This is the trade-off we are being asked to consider and ultimately make recommendations on and the GAP is anxious to hear the guidance provided to the GMT before we make further recommendations.

PFMC
11/15/06