

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON AMENDMENT 21: INTERSECTOR ALLOCATION

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) discussed the deliberations of the Groundfish Allocation Committee's (GAC) September 25-27 meeting as well as their report in Agenda Item D.5.c, GAC Report and has the following comments:

Overfished Stocks

The GMT agrees with the GAC recommendation to remove non-trawl dominant overfished species (bocaccio, canary, cowcod, and yelloweye) from Alternatives 1-3. The GMT notes that attempting to allocate overfished stocks on a long-term basis may not be informative to the Council, because of variations in stock status, and the effect on future fishing opportunities across sectors. The GMT notes that short-term allocations for non-trawl dominant overfished species would continue to be set through the two-year biennial specifications and management measures process.

The GMT supports the analysis of long-term allocation of trawl dominant overfished species (darkblotched rockfish, widow rockfish, and Pacific Ocean perch), but believes that within trawl allocation may need to be revisited as stocks rebuild.

Minor Shelf Rockfish

The GMT recommended removing minor shelf rockfish from all alternatives since access has been constrained by overfished species in recent years. The GMT acknowledges that once the co-occurring overfished stocks are rebuilt, then consideration of long-term allocations for minor shelf rockfish species may be appropriate. The GMT also notes that such an analysis would be onerous and may delay the analysis and implementation of intersector allocations.

"Other Fish"

The GMT discussed long-term allocations for the "Other Fish" complex. Currently, only one data-poor assessment exists for species within this category. Due to current lack of information, the GMT does not recommend analyzing intersector allocation at this point, but notes that establishing acceptable biological catch and optimum yield, as well as intersector allocation could be considered as part of the 2011-2012 biennial specifications and management measures.

Changes in Stock Status

The GMT recommends that the current fishery management plan language be maintained such that any long-term allocations are eliminated if the stock is declared overfished. Once a stock becomes rebuilt, the Council may develop long-term allocations where appropriate.

Yield Buffers

The GMT is requesting Council guidance on the purpose of yield buffers, specifically whether the yield buffers should be exclusively used to account for management uncertainty or whether they should also be used for such things as research catch, exempted fishing permits and incidental open access catches.

GMT Recommendations:

1. Remove non-trawl dominant overfished species (yelloweye, canary, cowcod, and bocaccio) and minor shelf rockfish species from alternatives going forward for analysis.
2. Remove minor shelf rockfish species from alternatives going forward for analysis.
3. Remove other fish from the analysis.
4. Development of long-term allocations for rebuilt stocks where appropriate.

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