

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
PART I- INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS TO 2009 AND 2010 GROUND FISH FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a 2010 in-season overview from Mr. Rob Jones of the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and offers the following recommendations. First, the GAP wishes to highlight that National Standard 1 requires management measures to achieve the optimum yield for the benefit of the U.S. fishing industry, and hopes that the Council will keep this in mind when making adjustments during the year. However, the GAP understands the first opportunity for in-season adjustments will likely be in period 2 (March-April).

Sablefish south of 36' north latitude

- *Open access*: Daily limit of 400 lbs.; 1,500-lb. weekly limit, with a bimonthly limit of 8,000 lbs. This is a return to the status quo after drastically increased limits for the last periods of this 2009.
- *Limited entry fixed-gear*: Remove the daily trip limit, adjust the weekly trip limit to a cumulative 2,000-pound limit, and remove the bimonthly limit. Removing the daily trip limit, as was done for the final periods of 2009, will improve safety and reduce discard while making the fishery more economically viable.

Sablefish north of 36' north latitude

- *Open access*: 300 lbs./day, 1,000 lbs/week and a bimonthly limit of 3,000 lbs.
- *Limited entry fixed-gear*: Remove the daily trip limit, allow 1,500 lbs./week, and set a bimonthly limit of 6,000 lbs. In recent years harvest has tracked well behind the allowable catch. Increasing limits should allow harvest to come closer to the area total allowable catch (TAC).

Scorpionfish, coastwide:

- Adjust the fixed gear limit from 800 lbs every two months to 1,600 lbs every two months. Increasing the limit will allow harvests to come closer to the OY.

Shoreside whiting, exempted fishing permits:

- The GMT brought the GAP's attention to an inconsistency in retention of other groundfish during the shoreside whiting fishery. In 2007 and years prior, shore-based whiting fishermen were allowed monthly trip limits for other groundfish incidentally caught in association with whiting (e.g., lingcod, sablefish, minor slope rockfish, shortbelly rockfish), and were paid for these fish. Under the current exempted fishing permit (EFP), managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Region, fishermen are paid only for yellowtail, darkblotched rockfish, and widow rockfish. The

GAP supports modifying the EFP in 2010 to be consistent with past practice. The GAP notes that targeting other species during a whiting trip will still be prohibited and that any overages of incidental catch will continue to be surrendered to appropriate officials.

PFMC
11/02/09