

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON SPECIFICATIONS PROCESS
FOR 2017-2018 FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) was briefed by Ms. Kelly Ames about this agenda item. The primary decision points at this meeting appear to be: 1) considering the timing for adopting non-salmon Endangered Species Act Workgroup management measures; and 2) the timeline for potentially removing big skate as an ecosystem component (EC) species.

The GAP appreciates the long process (the Amendment 24/Tier analysis process) the Council and National Marine Fisheries Service completed in order for fisheries to start on January 1. This has been of utmost importance to the seafood industry, as we have stated in the past.

GAP members reviewed D.5 Attachment 1, the proposed schedule for developing the 2017-18 specifications and management measures and found it acceptable. We also offer the following suggestions:

- 1) **Non-salmon ESA issues:** As mentioned in [Supplemental GAP Report D.4.a](#), we request any new management measures for ESA listed species be carefully evaluated so they don't interfere with or slow down the biennial management cycle.
- 2) **Big skate:** We understand moving skate from an EC species to an in-the-fishery species may be a time-consuming process. However, this has become an important fishery and the GAP requests creating a separate skate complex, with big skate as one of the contributing species, be moved forward expeditiously so as not to detract from the biennial cycle momentum.
- 3) **New management measures:** The GAP is prepared to come to the September Council meeting with a potential list of new management measures. Some of these may include: a) development of rockfish conservation area (RCA) lines in California to accommodate a 60-mile bank closure to protect cowcod, which the GAP has brought before the Council on several occasions; b) potential changes to management measures relating to canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, arrowtooth flounder and/or kelp greenling, depending on stock assessment results this year.