

FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 2--ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has been developing an amendment to the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to address revised National Standard 1 guidelines as described in the Final Rule published on January 16, 2009 (74 FR 3178). At the April 2010 meeting the Council adopted a range of alternatives for public review, which are described in Attachment 1. At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to take final action by identifying a preferred alternative.

Attachment 2 contains proposed amendments to the text of the HMS FMP to incorporate the changes adopted by this action. Marginal notes highlight differences in how the FMP would be amended according to which alternative is chosen.

The FMP amendment language is fairly general, authorizing the Council to establish reference points, including allowable biological catch (ABC) and annual catch limits (ACLs), consistent with the National Standard 1 Guidelines. Under the alternatives managed stocks could be subject to the “international exception” described at 50 CFR 600.310(h)(2)(ii). ABCs and ACLs need not be set for these stocks although other reference points—MSY, status determination criteria (SDC), and optimum yield—still must be set. Under Alternative 2 (see Attachment 1) all HMS stocks would be exempted but under Alternatives 3 and 4 shortfin mako and/or common thresher shark would not be exempted from this requirement. If the Council chooses Alternative 3 or 4, the Council should consider initiating the process of establishing the ACLs for these stocks under the periodic management cycle described in Chapter 5 of the FMP. Agenda Item E.3 presents the opportunity to start that process.

Council Action:

Adopt a preferred alternative and review the draft amendment language to ensure consistency with the preferred alternative.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 1: Draft Environmental Assessment (Partial), Amendment 2 to the HMS FMP.
2. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 2: Draft Amendment Language, HMS FMP Amendment 2.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Amendment

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05/26/10