

INITIAL ACTIONS FOR SETTING 2015-2016 GROUND FISH FISHERIES

In June, the Council adopted a process and schedule for deciding harvest specifications and management measures for 2015 and beyond groundfish fisheries (see [Agenda Item F.7.a, Attachment 3, June 2013](#)). Based on this schedule, the Council will begin deciding groundfish harvest specifications and new management measures for 2015-2016 (and beyond) groundfish fisheries at this meeting. Specifically, the Council is tasked with adopting overfishing limits (OFLs), a preliminary range of acceptable biological catches (ABCs), and a preliminary range of new management measures for 2015-2016 fisheries.

Proposed 2015-2016 OFLs and matrices of potential 2015 and 2016 ABCs based on the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC's) estimated sigmas for each stock/stock category and a range of overfishing probabilities (P*s) are provided in tables in Attachment 1. The SSC will review these proposed harvest specifications, stock categories, and sigma values and make their recommendations to the Council. Additionally, the SSC Groundfish Subcommittee met via teleconference this summer to discuss their analysis and recommendations concerning the proxy F_{MSY} spawning potential ratio (SPR) for elasmobranchs. Their report is provided as Agenda Item G.7.b, SSC Groundfish Subcommittee Report. The Council should review these proposed harvest specifications and adopt those OFLs, stock categories, and stock/stock category sigma values recommended by the SSC. Additionally, the Council should adopt a preliminary range of ABCs based on their P* choice for more detailed analysis.

The Council has committed to narrowing the scope of management measures for consideration during the biennial process (see [Council Meeting Minutes from March 2013](#)). Eligible actions include adjusting existing management measures, including routine measures¹, and analyzing new management measures² that are necessary to keep catch within the ACL or address a habitat or protected resources concern. At June Council meetings in even years, the Council would decide which of the new management measures that did not meet the above-mentioned criteria would instead be considered in a subsequent, separate two-meeting process. These Council-recommended changes to the process are captured in a draft revision of the Council Operating Procedure (COP) 9 (Attachment 2). While the Council will formally adopt COP 9 under Agenda Item H.4, the proposed revisions are introduced here to allow the Council and its advisory bodies the opportunity to provide substantive input under this agenda item. In the time between the agenda items, a revised draft could be prepared for adoption under Agenda Item H.4.

Additionally, under this agenda item, the Council should adopt a preliminary range of new management measures that meet the above-mentioned criteria for analysis in the biennial process. Attachment 3 provides examples of how management measures might be categorized, which may help the Council determine the proposals for inclusion in the biennial process.

¹ Routine measures are those currently established in regulation. For example, adjustments to bag and trip limits could be increased or decreased as necessary to achieve but not exceed the ACL.

² New measures are those that have not previously been analyzed or implemented in regulation.

At its November 2013 meeting, the Council is scheduled to review preliminary analysis of the new management measures and provide guidance on adjustments to routine measures, including two-year allocations, to be analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement. The Council is scheduled to select preliminary preferred management measures at the April 2014 Council meeting and take final action in June 2014. As noted above, at its June 2014 meeting, the Council will also consider those management measures determined to be ineligible for consideration in the biennial process. If selected, the Council schedule for considering the management measures would be developed at that time.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt those 2015-2016 OFLs, stock categories, and sigma values recommended by the SSC.**
- 2. Adopt a preliminary range of 2015-2016 P*s/ABCs for more detailed analysis.**
- 3. Review and discuss proposed revisions to Council Operating Procedure 9 based on Council action taken thus far under Amendment 24.**
- 4. Adopt a prioritized range of new management measures for preliminary analysis.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.7.a, Attachment 1: Proposed Overfishing Limits and Potential Acceptable Biological Catches for 2015 and 2016 Groundfish Fisheries.
2. Agenda Item G.7.a, Attachment 2: Briefing paper authored by Dr. Andrè Punt: Management Strategy Evaluation for Rebuilding Revision Rules: A Proof of Concept.
3. Agenda Item G.7.a, Attachment 3: Proposed Revisions to COP 9.
4. Agenda Item G.7.a, Attachment 4: New Management Measures Process.
5. Agenda Item G.7.b, SSC Groundfish Subcommittee Report: SSC Groundfish Subcommittee Statement Regarding a Change in Target SPR Rate for West Coast Elasmobranch Species.
6. Agenda Item G.7.c, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview John DeVore & Kelly Ames
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Overfishing Limits and Preliminary P*s/Acceptable Biological Catches, Consider New Management Measures and Modifications to Council Operating Procedure 9

PFMC
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