

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
CONSIDERATION OF INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS - PART I

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) discussed inseason adjustments to 2010 groundfish fisheries with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and offers the following recommendations.

Limited Entry Non-Whiting Trawl Fisheries

The GAP recommends GMT Alternative 3 for limited entry trawl fisheries, which leaves the petrale cutouts open in period 6 and provides a slight increase in cumulative landing limits for healthy target species. The GAP notes that the GMT impact projections under Alternative 3 are within specified optimum yields (OYs) for petrale sole, other overfished species, and healthy target species. Closing the petrale cutouts in period 6 would greatly diminish petrale landings resulting in significant economic impacts to west coast fishing communities. The slight increase in bimonthly limits for the healthy species will provide some economic relief for depressed west coast fishing communities.

Conception Area Sablefish Fisheries

The GAP recommends GMT Alternative 2 for limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries targeting sablefish in the Conception area (Limited Entry: weekly limit of 2,800 lbs; Open Access: weekly limit of 800 lbs and a monthly limit of 1,600 lbs). The GAP believes there is a need to decrease daily trip limits (DTL) in this fishery to prevent exceeding the OY.

The GAP strongly recommends a decrease in the Conception area limited entry and open access sablefish DTL limits for next year to reduce the risk of early OY attainment in 2011. With no direct effort control mechanism for the open access fishery, it is anticipated that the same increase in effort would occur given the DTL limits adopted in the 2011-12 specifications process. The Amendment 21 non-trawl allocation of Conception area sablefish will provide fewer opportunities for Conception area fixed gear fisheries, which underscores the need for lower sablefish limits. The GAP notes that the public comment period for the proposed biennial specifications regulations is open until the end of the month and recommends the Council provide comment to NMFS to modify the final regulations to implement lower Conception area DTL limits. The GAP recommends tasking the GMT at this meeting with an analysis of lower DTL limits so that explicit recommendations can be considered under the final inseason action (Agenda Item I.7) on Thursday.