

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES: SARDINE FISHERY START DATE AND MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

The Pacific sardine fishery currently follows the calendar year, starting January 1 and ending December 31. The fishing year is broken into three periods: January 1-June 30, July 1-September 15, and September 16-December 31. Each fishing period is allocated 35 percent, 40 percent, and 25 percent, respectively, of the total allowable harvest for that fishing year.

An issue that has become more apparent in recent years is the fact that two summer surveys (the Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's acoustic-trawl summer survey) face a very compressed time frame if they are to deliver their products to the Stock Assessment Team (STAT) sufficiently in advance of the stock assessment review meeting (typically in late September or early October). This in turn makes it challenging for the STAT to deliver the final stock assessment documents to the Council on time for the November briefing book deadline.

At its April 2013 meeting, the Council considered a white paper that analyzed a start date change (http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/I2b_CPSMTandCPSAS_APR2013BB.pdf) and tasked the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) with developing an implementation plan that would enable final approval consideration. The CPSMT met with the Scientific and Statistical Committee's Coastal Pelagic Species Subcommittee (SSC CPSS) and representatives of the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel in May 2013 to further consider the process. The SSC CPSS was asked to specifically consider the scientific validity of generating a biomass estimate and management specifications for the six-month transition period of January 1 through June 30, 2013. The CPSMT implementation plan is provided as (Agenda Item I.3.b, CPSMT Report).

In the event the Council adopts a change to the fishery start date, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will need to develop new regulations, and a change to Council Operating Procedure 9 will be required to implement a start date change. The Council would have to approve COP changes.

Council Action:

- 1. Decide on a Change to the Sardine Fishery Start Date.**
- 2. Approve Process for Management Specifications for Transition Year.**
- 3. Approve Annual Management Schedule.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.3.b, CPSMT Report.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt Changes to Sardine Fishery Start Date for 2014 and the Annual Management Schedule

Kerry Griffin

PFMC
05/31/13