

**COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**Management and Activity Cycles**

9

Approved by Council: 07/10/85

Revised: 09/16/87, 04/06/95, 11/03/99, 03/11/05, **11/06/13, 04/10/14**

PURPOSE

To establish management and activity cycles conducted by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), its advisory entities, staff for the groundfish, salmon, coastal pelagic species, halibut, and highly migratory species fisheries, and administrative matters.

MANAGEMENT AND ACTIVITY CYCLES

- Schedule 1 Biennial management cycle and activities related to groundfish management.
- Schedule 2 Annual management cycle and activities related to salmon management.
- Schedule 3 Annual management cycle and activities related to coastal pelagic species management.
- Schedule 4 Annual management cycle and activities related to halibut management.
- Schedule 5 Biennial management cycle and activities related to highly migratory species management.
- Schedule 6 Annual administrative management cycle and activities.

**SCHEDULE 1. Biennial management cycle and activities related to groundfish management.**

| Year   | Month     | Entity and Management Activity  |
|--------|-----------|---|
| Year 1 | September | To begin development of specifications for the next biennial management period (Years 3 and 4), the <b>Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)</b> review and incorporate new impact assessment methodologies, including new observer data from January through December of the previous year, approve stock assessments completed in Year 1, and recommend appropriate harvest specifications.<br><br><b>GMT and Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP)</b> meet to review current fishery status to inform <b>Council</b> action on routine inseason management recommendations <sup>1</sup> , as necessary for Year 1. |

<sup>1</sup> Routine management measures have been previously analyzed and are defined in regulation and include adjustments to rockfish conservation area boundaries and most trip limits, bag limits and size limits. Routine measures may be changed after a single Council meeting.

---

**SCHEDULE 1. Biennial management cycle and activities related to groundfish management.**

---

| Year             | Month    | Entity and Management Activity  |
|------------------|----------|---|
| Year 1<br>(cont) |          | <p><b>GMT</b> and <b>GAP</b> provide recommendations to inform <b>Council</b> action on harvest specifications and management measures for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><b>Council</b> adopts final modeling methodologies, stock assessments for the next biennial period for Years 3 and 4, final preferred overfishing limits (OFLs) and sigmas, as recommended by the SSC.<sup>2</sup> The Council will also adopt a range of P*/acceptable biological catches (ABCs), if applicable, including preliminary preferred values.</p> <p><b>Council</b> will provide initial fishery management guidance, including a preliminary range of management measures necessary to keep catch within or attain a specification or to address a habitat or protected resources concern for analysis and implementation in Years 3 and 4.</p> |
|                  | October  | <p><b>SSC Groundfish Subcommittee</b> meets to review overfished species rebuilding analyses as well as any stock assessments approved for further review by the Council at the “mop-up” stock assessment review panel for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><b>GMT</b> meets to review new stock assessments and rebuilding analyses. <b>GMT</b> drafts a recommended range of ACLs and preliminary management measures for consideration at the November Council meeting for Years 3 and 4.</p>   |
|                  | November | <p><b>Coastal treaty tribes</b> initiate allocations and/or regulations specific to the tribes by written request to the Council and NOAA’s Regional Administrator prior to the November Council meeting for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><b>GMT and GAP</b> meet to review current fishery status and develop routine inseason management recommendations to inform <b>Council</b> action, as necessary for Years 1 and 2.</p> <p><b>GMT and GAP</b> provide recommendations to inform <b>Council</b> action on harvest specifications and management measures for Years 3 and 4.</p>   |

---

<sup>2</sup> Council action could be postponed from September to November for any stock assessments recommended for further review by the SSC.

---

**SCHEDULE 1. Biennial management cycle and activities related to groundfish management.**

---

| Year             | Month   | Entity and Management Activity   |
|------------------|---------|--|
| Year 1<br>(cont) |         | <p><i>Council</i> adopts rebuilding analyses and any assessments sent to the SSC Groundfish Subcommittee for review as recommended by the SSC. <i>Council</i> adopts final preferred P*/ABCs; preliminary preferred non-overfished species ACLs, and, if necessary; a range of overfished species ACLs and preliminary preferred ACLs for overfished species for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><i>Council</i> selects a range of 2-year allocations, final range of management measures for detailed analysis necessary to keep catch within or attain a specification or to address a habitat or protected resources concern, and preliminary exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications for Years 3 and 4.</p> |
| Year 2           | January | <p><i>GMT</i> meets to review and analyze Council actions relative to harvest specifications and management measures provided in Year 1, if necessary, for Years 3 and 4.</p>  |
|                  | March   | <p><i>GMT and GAP</i> meet to review current fishery status and routine inseason management recommendations to inform <i>Council</i> action, as necessary for Year 2.</p> <p><i>GMT and GAP</i> provide recommendations to inform <i>Council</i> action on harvest specifications and management measures for Years 3 and 4, if necessary.</p> <p><i>Council</i> receives an informational briefing on selected results of the harvest specifications and management measures analysis for Years 3 and 4, if requested. The <i>Council</i> may be asked to provide guidance or take action on emerging issues, as necessary.</p>   |
|                  | April   | <p><i>GMT and GAP</i> meet to review Pacific whiting harvest specifications and management measures as well as current fishery status and routine inseason management recommendations for Year 2.</p> <p><i>GMT and GAP</i> provide recommendations to inform Council action on harvest specifications and management measures for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><i>Council</i> recommends routine inseason management adjustments as necessary for Year 2.</p>  |

---

---

**SCHEDULE 1. Biennial management cycle and activities related to groundfish management.**

---

| Year             | Month     | Entity and Management Activity  |
|------------------|-----------|---|
| Year 2<br>(cont) |           | <p>Consistent with the U.S./Canada agreement, the <i>Council</i> considers the harvest specifications recommended by the Joint Management Committee and confirms or recommends a lower U.S. TAC. The <i>Council</i> recommends set-asides and any adjustments to management measures for the Pacific Whiting fishery in Year 2.</p> <p><i>Council</i> adopts preliminary management measures for public review and final harvest specifications for Years 3 and 4.</p>  |
|                  | June      | <p><i>Coastal treaty tribes</i> refine requests for allocations and/or regulations specific to the tribes by written notice to the Council and NOAA’s Regional Administrator prior to the June Council meeting for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><i>GMT and GAP</i> meet to review current fishery status and routine inseason management recommendations, as necessary for Year 2.</p> <p><i>GMT and GAP</i> provide recommendations to inform Council action on harvest specifications and management measures for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><i>Council</i> recommends routine inseason management adjustments, as necessary for Year 2.</p> <p><i>Council</i> adopts final EFP applications and management measures as well as any corrections to harvest specifications for implementation by NMFS for Years 3 and 4.</p> <p><i>Council</i> adopts a draft calendar and prioritized list of new management measures<sup>3</sup> to be analyzed outside of the harvest specifications and management measures process. This process occurs biennially.</p> |
|                  | July      | <p>Council staff and <i>GMT</i> complete analyses and NEPA documents, as necessary, for biennial management specifications and submit them to NOAA Years 3 and 4.</p>   |
|                  | September | <p><i>GMT, GAP, and Council</i> participate in routine inseason management activities and off-year activities, as appropriate for Year 2.</p>   |
|                  | November  | <p><i>GMT, GAP, and Council</i> participate in routine inseason management activities and off-year activities, as appropriate for Years 2 and 3.</p>  |

---

<sup>3</sup> New management measures are those not previously analyzed and implemented in regulation.

---

**SCHEDULE 1. Biennial management cycle and activities related to groundfish management.**

---

| Year                | Month     | Entity and Management Activity   |
|---------------------|-----------|--|
| Year 3 <sup>1</sup> | January   | <i>U.S. Department of Commerce</i> implements harvest level specifications and management measures for next biennial management period (Years 3 and 4).  |
|                     | March     | <i>GMT, GAP, and Council</i> participate in routine inseason management activities and off-year activities, as appropriate for Year 3.   |
|                     | April     | <i>GMT and GAP</i> meet to review Pacific whiting harvest specifications and management measures as well as current fishery status and routine inseason management recommendations for <i>Council</i> action, as necessary for Year 3.   |
|                     | June      | Consistent with the U.S./Canada agreement, the <i>Council</i> considers the harvest specifications recommended by the Joint Management Committee and confirms or recommends a lower U.S. TAC. The <i>Council</i> recommends set-asides and any adjustments to management measures for the Pacific Whiting fishery in Year 3. |
|                     | September | <i>GMT, GAP, and Council</i> participate in routine inseason management activities and off-year activities, as appropriate for Year 3. Repeat management activities of September in Year 1 to begin development of next biennial cycle.  |

---

<sup>1</sup> GMT generally meets in January, July, and October to review and discuss groundfish management issues, including stock assessments and STAR Panel reviews.

**SCHEDULE 2. Annual management cycle and activities related to salmon management.**<sup>1</sup>

---

| Month    | Entity and Management Activity  |
|----------|---|
| January  | <i>Salmon Technical Team (STT)</i> meets to draft annual fishery review for the previous season.  |
| February | <i>STT</i> meets to draft the report providing projected stock abundances and potential management measure impacts.   |
| March    | <i>Council</i> meets to adopt no more than three annual salmon fishery management alternatives and conducts public hearings (hearings may extend into April). |
|          | <i>Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS)</i> meets with the Council to develop initial annual management alternative recommendations.                                |

**SCHEDULE 2. Annual management cycle and activities related to salmon management.** <sup>1</sup>

| Month               | Entity and Management Activity  |
|---------------------|---|
| March<br>(cont)     | <i>STT</i> meets to develop impact analyses of the Council's proposed annual management alternatives, identifies management concerns, and participates in public hearings.  |
| April               | <p><i>Council</i> meets to adopt final annual salmon fishery management measures.</p> <p><i>STT and SAS</i> meet with Council to assist in selection and analysis of final annual management measures.</p> <p><i>SSC</i> meets to identify methodology issues which merit review, informs the Council of methodologies selected for review, and establishes a review schedule.</p> <p><i>U.S. Department of Commerce</i> reviews and implements the Council's recommendations in time for May 1 season opening.</p> |
| May through October | <i>Council, STT, and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)</i> monitor fisheries to implement inseason management provisions, as necessary.  |
| October or November | <i>SSC, STT, and SAS</i> meet with Council to provide direction as needed, especially with regard to the review of prediction and harvest impact modeling procedures, conservation objectives, and the annual management measure process.   |

<sup>1</sup> For additional detail, see operating procedure for "Annual Salmon Management Process."

**SCHEDULE 3. Annual management cycle and activities related to coastal pelagic species management.**

| Month   | Entity and Management Activity   |
|---|--|
| <b>PACIFIC MACKEREL</b>   |  |
| Pacific mackerel assessments will be conducted on a rotating cycle. Every four years, a full assessment is conducted, and in the intervening four years an update assessment is conducted. Annual specifications are set on a biennial basis. In assessment years (either full or update), the following schedule will be followed: |  |
| April   | <i>Assessment authors</i> prepare draft assessment documents.  |
| May   | <i>Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT), Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS), and public</i> review draft assessments, executive summaries, and recommended harvest guidelines. |

**SCHEDULE 3. Annual management cycle and activities related to coastal pelagic species management.**

| Month                  | Entity and Management Activity   |
|------------------------|--|
| June                   | <p><i>Assessment authors</i> submit final assessments, executive summaries, and recommended harvest guidelines to Council staff for inclusion in June Council meeting briefing book.</p> <p><i>SSC</i> reviews assessments, executive summaries, and recommended harvest guidelines.</p> <p><i>Council</i> adopts annual harvest level specifications and management measures.</p> <p><i>U.S. Department of Commerce</i> implements annual harvest level specifications and management measures. Pacific mackerel season opens July 1.</p> |
| <b>PACIFIC SARDINE</b> |  |
| February               | <p><i>Assessment authors</i> prepare draft assessment documents.</p>   |
| March                  | <p><i>CPSMT, CPSAS, and public</i> review draft assessment, executive summary, and recommended harvest guideline.</p>  |
| April                  | <p><i>SSC</i> reviews assessment, executive summary, and recommended harvest guideline.</p> <p><i>Council</i> adopts annual harvest level specification and management measures.</p> <p><i>U.S. Department of Commerce</i> implements annual harvest level specification and management measures. Pacific sardine season opens July 1.</p>   |

**MONITORED SPECIES**

The CPS FMP characterizes monitored stock management as tracking trends in landings, and qualitative comparison to available abundance data, but without periodic stock assessments or periodic adjustments to target harvest levels. After harvest specifications have been established, they will remain in place until the Council takes action to adjust the harvest specifications, or to move a monitored species to active management. If the Council wishes to adjust harvest level specifications or management measures, the process will follow that for Pacific mackerel and Pacific sardine. Assessment authors will present a draft stock assessment in advance of a review by the CPSMT, CPSAS, and the public. Final assessments and recommended harvest specifications and management measures will be included in the appropriate briefing book, for review by the SSC. The Council adopts final specifications, and

**SCHEDULE 3. Annual management cycle and activities related to coastal pelagic species management.**

| Month | Entity and Management Activity |
|-------|--------------------------------|
|-------|--------------------------------|

the U.S. Department of Commerce implements the harvest specifications and management measures.

NOTE: The Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) document for coastal pelagic species will be prepared and presented in two sections. The main section will be submitted at the June Council meeting. This portion of the SAFE will include the annual Pacific mackerel and Pacific sardine assessments, evaluation of the fisheries based on the calendar year, and the status of monitored species. The second (supplemental) section will include any relevant information regarding the status of the CPS fisheries. The supplemental section, when compiled, will be presented at the November Council meeting.

The coastal pelagic species management cycle does not provide for inseason changes to management specifications that are specified at the beginning of the season and/or in the fishery management plan except through emergency action.

**SCHEDULE 4. Annual management cycle and activities related to Pacific halibut management.**

| Year | Month | Entity and Management Activity |
|------|-------|--------------------------------|
|------|-------|--------------------------------|

|        |           |   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| Year 1 | September | <p><i>Council</i> receives a report on the status of the current Pacific halibut fishery. With regard to next year’s season (Year 2), the <i>Council</i> hears management recommendations from the states and public; and, if necessary, adopts for public review proposed changes to recreational season structuring, Federal regulations, and minor changes to the Pacific halibut catch sharing plan for fisheries in Year 2 (e.g., opening dates, days per week, early season/late season ratios, and port/area sharing).</p> |
|--------|-----------|---|

*SSC* reviews proposed halibut bycatch estimates or other halibut estimation methodologies as necessary prior to NMFS submission to the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC).

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| September or October | <p><i>States</i> conduct public workshops on the proposed changes to the catch sharing plan or sport fishery measures, as appropriate.</p> |
|----------------------|--|

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| October or November | <p><i>Council</i> receives a report on the status of the current Pacific halibut fishery. Within the scope of the proposed changes formulated at the September meeting and with further public input, the <i>Council</i> adopts recommendations for management changes to be implemented by NMFS in the catch sharing plan and Federal regulations governing Pacific halibut fisheries in the coming season (Year 2).</p> |
|---------------------|---|



**SCHEDULE 4. Annual management cycle and activities related to Pacific halibut management.**

| Year             | Month                    | Entity and Management Activity  |
|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Year 1<br>(cont) | November through January | <i>IPHC</i> staff distributes draft documents that impact Area 2A to the Council office and NMFS.   |
| Year 2           | January                  | <i>IPHC</i> meets to establish quotas for each management area.   |
|                  | February                 | <i>NMFS</i> publishes proposed rule to implement catch sharing plan and prepares appropriate NEPA documents.  |
|                  | March                    | <p><i>Council</i> adopts, for public review, a range of landing restrictions for incidental halibut harvest in the non-Indian troll salmon fishery for the May 1-April 30 period. If necessary, the Council recommends inseason action to modify previously set April 1-30 landing restrictions.</p> <p>If necessary, the Council adopts final incidental landing restrictions for the commercial longline sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, Washington.</p> <p><i>Council</i> holds public hearings to receive input on salmon fishing alternatives and incidental halibut landing limit options in the non-Indian salmon troll fishery for the May 1 to April 30 period.</p> |
|                  | April                    | <p><i>NMFS</i> publishes final rule to implement catch sharing plan and for incidental retention of Pacific halibut in the commercial non-Indian troll fishery and the longline sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis as appropriate.</p> <p><i>Council</i> adopts final recommendations for incidental harvest in the non-Indian troll salmon fishery for the May 1 to April 30 period.</p>  |
|                  | May through September    | <i>NMFS</i> regional director makes inseason adjustments to sport seasons, the non-Indian commercial troll salmon fishery, and the directed fixed gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, as necessary. The <i>IPHC</i> closes the non-Indian directed commercial halibut fisheries when quotas are projected to be met.  |

**SCHEDULE 5. Biennial management cycle and activities related to highly migratory species management.**

| Year             | Month     | Entity and Management Activity   |
|------------------|-----------|--|
| Year 1           | June      | <i>Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT)</i> provides update to the Council on status of the HMS fisheries and, as appropriate, proposed adjustments to the numerical estimates of MSY, OY, and SDC in a preliminary SAFE report. If necessary, Council directs HMSMT to prepare draft regulatory analysis to implement revised estimates of reference point values, ACLs or other harvest objectives and/or management measures. |
| Year 1<br>(cont) | September | <i>HMSMT</i> presents annual SAFE document to Council. If necessary, Council directs HMSMT to prepare a draft regulatory analysis to implement revised estimates of reference point values, ACLs or other harvest objectives and/or management measures. Council adopts for public review proposed actions addressing concerns from current and previous SAFE reports.   |
|                  | November  | Council adopts final action and submits to NMFS for approval   |
| Year 2           | April     | If approved by <i>NMFS</i> , measures become effective, and stay in effect for at least two years.   |

As detailed above the HMS FMP established a biennial management cycle with the regulatory/statistical year April 1 to March 31, which provides sufficient time for data analysis, provides for timely response to fishery problems, and allows most fishers adequate access to the management process, as scheduled.

The cycle is repeated biennially, with new actions considered in September and becoming effective in April every other year. The Council would schedule HMS for the June, September, and November Council meetings.

Under this biennial cycle, the HMSMT would conduct ongoing reviews of HMS fisheries and stock status. The HMSMT would prepare an annual SAFE document for the Council’s September meeting.

This management cycle may be altered to a different annual or multi-year management cycle by majority vote of the Council without necessity of an FMP amendment, provided the Council gives six-month advance notice to the public of any intent to alter the management cycle.

**SCHEDULE 6. Annual administrative management cycle and activities.**

---

| Month      | Management Activity   |
|------------|---|
| Year-Round | Review any needed changes in the Council's policies and procedures for revisions to the Statement of Organizations, Practices, and Procedures. Fill vacancies in advisory body positions as necessary. Plan staff workload and Council meeting agendas. |
| June       | Elect Council Chair and Vice Chair., effective August 11.   |
| September  | Every third year, review composition of the SSC and advisory subpanels and request nominations to fill the next three-year term. Provide guidance on administrative and programmatic budget issues.   |
| November   | Every third year, appoint membership of the SSC and advisory subpanels for three-year terms beginning January 1. Annually provide guidance on administrative and programmatic budget issues.  |

---