

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON OMNIBUS REGULATION CHANGE PRIORITIES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the documents contained in the briefing book under this agenda item and received a briefing from Ms. Jamie Goen from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) West Coast Region (WCR) and Mr. Jim Seger of Council staff. Under this agenda item, the Council is considering clarifications to upcoming rulemakings. On that subject, the GMT offers additional information regarding the scientific sorting requirements the Council recommended as part of the 2015-2016 harvest specifications and management measures. This report also contains additional information intended to help the Council prioritize management measures. Following the Council's completion of this agenda item, the GMT expects to provide further input on prioritization and possible timelines under Agenda Item I.7. Future Workload Planning.

The GMT appreciates the comprehensive prioritization criteria developed by NMFS WCR staff. The GMT took another approach to considering the management measures that may provide the Council with an additional tool to aid in prioritization. The GMT focused its detailed discussions on the items under Section C in Attachment 1 ([Agenda Item J.1.a, Attachment 1, September 2014](#)). We felt that was the best place to focus our time and energy, given that the items in Sections A and B are already in progress or have their own timeline or process already identified.

1. New Information/Questions/Clarifications

1.1 Scientific Sorting Requirement Interpretation

The GMT understands there is some confusion on the interpretation of the Council's action on scientific sorting requirements for species managed in the Slope Rockfish Complex. It would be helpful to get clarification from the Council on whether or not the scientific sorting requirement is intended to sort rougheye/blackspotted rockfish together with shortraker rockfish (one unit) or to sort rougheye/blackspotted separately from shortraker rockfish (two units).

We reviewed the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) report and appreciate the additional thought put into considering the implications to sampling programs resulting from the new sorting requirements. The GMT also reviewed Council documents written in 2013 regarding potential impacts of increasing the number of market categories to data quality. The GMT is uncertain how separating rougheye/blackspotted rockfish from shortraker rockfish might impact data quality. The utility of separating rougheye rockfish from shortraker rockfish depends, in part, on the ability to discern the two species from one another. The GMT conducted a survey of state port biologists and samplers and some reported that smaller-sized rougheye rockfish and shortraker rockfish were often mistaken for the other ([Agenda Item G.8.b, GMT Report3, September, 2013](#)). Council documents that may be relevant to this discussion (e.g., impacts of separating or not separating species when reorganizing stock complexes or requiring a new scientific sorting requirement) can be found in: [Agenda Item D.3.b, Supplemental GMT Report, April, 2013](#); [Agenda Item F.8.b, Supplemental GAP Report, June, 2013](#); [Agenda Item F.8.b, ODFW Report, June 2013](#); [Agenda Item G.8.b, GMT Report3, September, 2013](#); and [Agenda Item G.8.b, Supplemental GMT Report 5, September 2013](#).

2. Scoring Matrix for Prioritization

The GMT recognizes that the process of prioritization is complicated. We attempted to develop an organized way for the GMT to discuss the multiple issues around each management measure and provide meaningful input to the Council. The GMT's approach to looking at prioritization of the management measures in Attachment 1 was to develop a process similar to the Productivity and Susceptibility Analysis (Cope et al, 2011). This would compare each management measure with respect to relative positive policy impacts and overall complexity of implementation. By examining the relationship between these two categories, the Council may be able to identify items that have high policy impacts with fewer implementation considerations, rather than simply considering a ranking of each management measure from high to low.

The GMT views this exercise as a potential framework that could be used to provide initial insight that might help with prioritization, but that could also be further refined and used to evaluate and prioritize management measures in the future.

2.1 Summary of Attributes and Scoring

To aid the Council in prioritization of management measures, the GMT attempted to provide some insight into the potential positive impacts that some of the management measures may have and the relationship to some estimate of relative workload. The GMT used two categories of attributes: the first category of attributes ("Relative Positive Policy Impacts") generally stem from the National Standard Guidelines and the Goals and Objectives of the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP); and the second category of attributes ("Overall Complexity of Implementation") attempted to characterize the relative level of complexity associated with implementation of the management measure.

2.1.1 Relative Positive Policy Impacts of Management Measure

This category of attributes was developed to focus our discussion around the potential for the management measure to improve conservation, provide fishing opportunities and increased flexibility, increased attainment of annual catch limits (ACLs), and foster rebuilding. These were adapted from some of the considerations listed in [Agenda Item J.1.a, Attachment 2](#). We chose the following metrics because we thought they could be scored with our current understanding of impacts of the management measures and in the time available at this meeting.

- Potential to reduce catch rate of overfished species (catch rate relative to target species)
- Reduction in risk to Marine Mammal Protection Act and/or Endangered Species Act species
- Increase in attainment of non-overfished species ACL
- Geographic scale of impact
- Potential for cost reduction or added value

2.1.2 Overall Complexity of Implementation of Management Measure

The GMT also wanted to consider what was involved with moving forward with each management measure, as we recognize that there are limits on the amount of work that can be accomplished when funneling multiple actions through the various processes required between

inception and implementation. This category of attributes is intended to capture the relative level of time and work that might be required if the measure was moved forward by the Council for consideration.

- Minimum time requirements (in a calendar sense, two-meeting vs. three-meeting/FMP amendment)
- Potential costs of implementation and resources/staff needed
- Current sense of the level of controversy, and the potential for controversy
- Relative level of complexity of the management measure

2.1.3 Unranked Items

The following management measures from Section C of Attachment 1 were not ranked for the reasons stated below:

- Item #55: Develop Criteria for Distributing Adaptive Management Program because of the difficulty in predicting what the program elements might entail.
- Item #64: Management Model Review and Refinement since this is an ongoing refinement of how we account for impacts rather than a management measure.
- Item #68: Evaluate Nearshore Management Approaches, Including Deferral because it could also be broad enough that it is difficult to predict program elements.

2.2 Methods and Caveats

The results of this ranking method should be considered within the context of the caveats described here. The method for ranking presented here is a first look, due to limitations on time and scope for this analysis. Our current ranking only looks at positive impacts of the various attributes but did not look at negative impacts. For example, management measures that might increase flexibility or increase attainment of the non-overfished species ACL have scores reflecting their relative potential positive impacts but were not scored negatively on the potential for things like increased catch rates of overfished species, a potential change in ESA-listed species impacts, etc. While our ranking did not include potential negative impacts, we expect that the full scope of impacts, both positive and negative, would be explicitly addressed in the more holistic analysis of the management measure if it were to move forward.

The matrix approach hinges on rankings that were made by GMT consensus. The GMT attempted to rank each attribute in a consistent manner across the wide range of management measures. We recognize that there is subjectivity associated with the scoring; however, we attempted to be systematic in our assessment of each management measure by comparing it with attributes and standardized the scaling of those attributes.

The GMT notes that a lower ranking on the “Relative Positive Policy Impacts” axis in no way implies that a management measure is not worthwhile. All of the management measures under consideration are on this omnibus list because they have value as a management tool. The GMT also notes that the relative level of potential positive impacts, and the relative associated potential workload that were ranked in this analysis might shift up or down, left or right if other attributes or criteria are added.

2.3 Graphics and Discussion

This exercise was not intended to result in a prioritized list of all of the management measures but was instead focused more on providing a tool that the Council could use to evaluate the potential policy impacts and overall complexity of implementation. For example, if the Council is interested in considering the Mid Water Sport Fishery (Item #60), Figure 1 shows there might be fewer implementation complexities and mid-level policy impacts.

The attributes (criteria) we chose influence where a management measure falls out in our results (Figure 1). For example, the Groundfish Conservation Areas for Rougheye Rockfish (Item #37) were intended to lower the catch of rougheye rockfish and does not necessarily reduce encounters with overfished species or increase the ability to attain the ACL of target species. The low policy impact seen for #37 is a reflection of these criteria.

The GMT acknowledges that the attributes we chose may not be a complete list of criteria that might interest the Council. For example, we did not include a specific attribute that ranked how much economic impact a management measure might have on a fleet, sector, or port. We chose not to do this because we felt that considering ACL attainment of targeted species could serve as a proxy for changes in revenue (i.e., higher ACL attainment would likely result in higher revenue).

Finally, the GMT feels the approach could be expanded in the future if the Council views this as a helpful tool. That is, we could include other attributes, both positive and negative (e.g., positive net revenue to a fleet/sector/port or increased costs to fleet/sector/port), exclude some of the existing attributes, or weight the existing attributes differently (i.e., other than giving them equal weight as in this analysis). The approach might also be adapted to evaluate potential negative impacts.

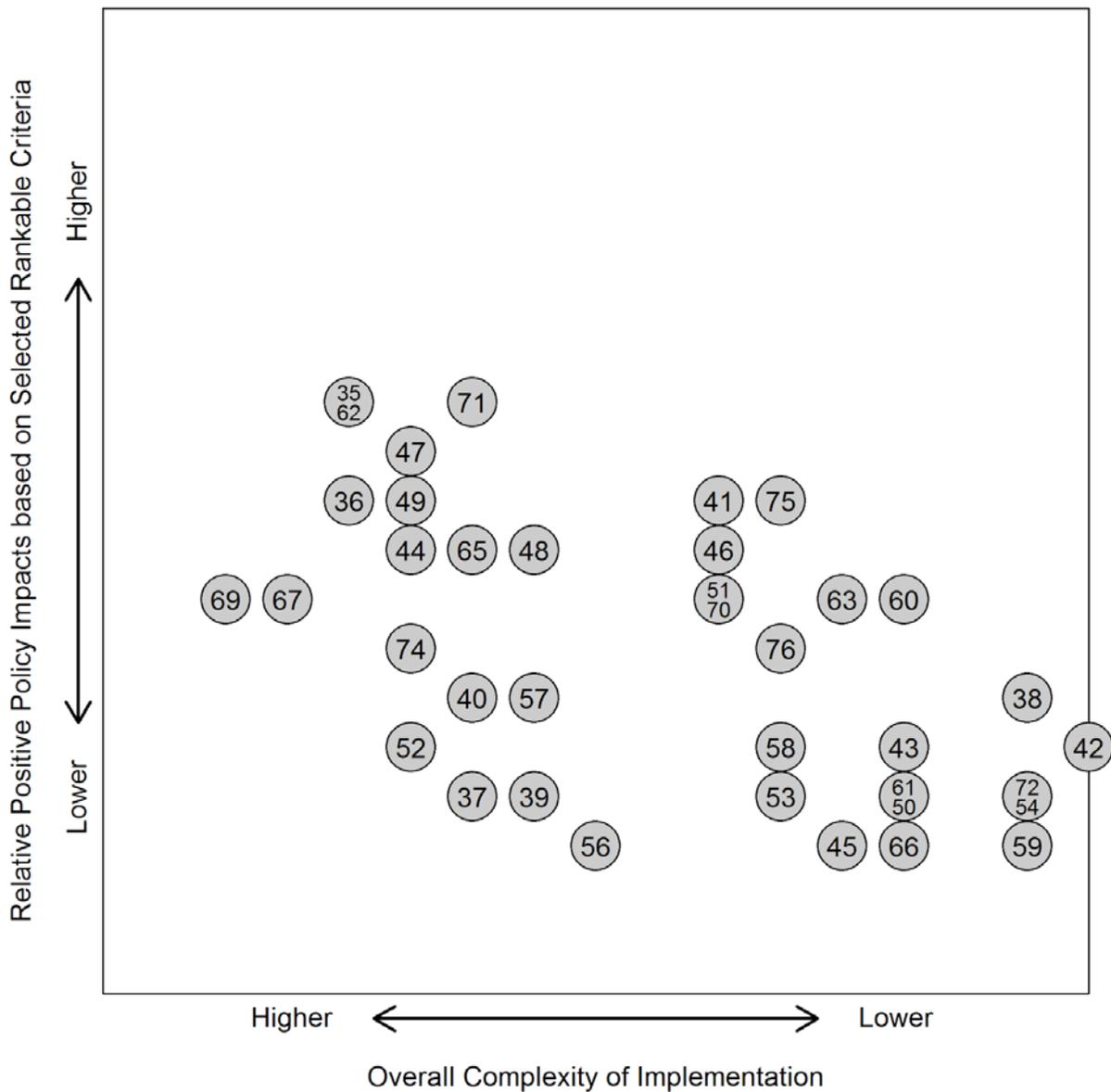


Figure 1. Graphical depiction of average scores in the two dimensions of Relative Positive Policy Impacts of Management Measure and Overall Complexity of Implementation. The numbers in each point correspond to the management measure Item Number in Attachment 1. In both dimensions, the value depicted is based on equally weighted average of selected rankable criteria for a subset of potential objectives. Items closer to the upper-right corner of the figure are potentially less complex and potentially have a higher relative positive policy impact. Items closer to the lower-left corner would generally be more complex and have relatively less positive policy impact within the specific criteria that were considered in this ranking. It is important for the Council to consider that on average, items with greater potential impact are often more complex to implement.

3. Possible Collections of Management Measures

In addition to the above exercise, the GMT attempted to identify some possible collections of similar management measures contained within the list. The examples below are again not comprehensive, each possible collection was discussed independent of others, and some items could potentially fit in more than one collection.

Examples of possible collections:

- Trawl Trailing Actions--33, 34, 42-55, 65
- Fixed Gear (Sablefish) fisheries--56, 58, 69, 72, 74, 76
- Recreational--59, 60
- Enforcement--39, 45, 54, 70, 76
- Administrative--42, 54, 72
- Gear issues--43, 46, 48, 57
- Groundfish Conservation Area/area management issues--37, 47, 66, 75,
- Could be removed--73 (appears to be a duplicate of 69)

4. References

Cope, J.M., DeVore, J., Dick, E. J., Ames, K., Budrick, J., Erickson, D.L., Grebel, J., Hanshew, G., Jones, R., Mattes, L., Niles, C., and Williams, S. 2011. An Approach to Defining Stock Complexes for U.S. West Coast Groundfishes Using Vulnerabilities and Ecological Distributions. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, 31(4): 589-604.

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