

GROUND FISH PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULES

Situation: At the April 1999 meeting, the Council was advised the combined resources of staff, the Groundfish Management Team (GMT), and NMFS Regional Offices are inadequate to address all of the issues the Council had intended to address in the immediate future. The Council reviewed the list of issues and established priorities for staff and GMT as identified in Attachment G.11.a. Issues below the line will be addressed only as higher priority issues are completed or time becomes available.

- Currently, the Council's Ad-Hoc Allocation Committee and GMT are developing rebuilding plans for lingcod, bocaccio, and Pacific ocean perch; final Council action is scheduled for the November 1999 meeting.
- Council staff members are working to complete the fishing community baseline description by September 1999.
- The stock assessment scientists, GMT, and others have already begun the stock assessment part of the annual management cycle.
- The GMT's review of the technical basis for the current harvest policy (F_{MSY}) has been delayed until August; information from that review is likely to be critical to the rebuilding plans.
- The bycatch section of Amendment 11 was disapproved and must be re-submitted, possibly in conjunction with the rebuilding plan amendment.
- The Council has initiated development of a strategic plan for the groundfish fishery that will be ongoing for the next year or so.

In April, the Council agreed that development of an observer program and the harvest policy review are the highest priorities in addition to the mandatory activities. Other issues were ranked generally to be addressed as possible. Committee and staff time are being devoted to habitat areas of particular concern and other issues as time permits.

The Council received status reports on several of these issues under previous agenda items. At this time, the GMT and Council staff will be available to update the status, point out problem areas, and answer any questions. The Council should review the work plan, priorities, and schedules and identify any necessary changes.

Council Action:

- 1. Change priorities and/or schedules if necessary.**

Reference Materials:

1. Council Work Plan for Remainder of 1999 (Attachment G.11.a.).

PFMC
06/08/99