

STATUS REPORTS

Situation: This agenda item includes several issues on which the Council will receive updates at the June meeting. Council action may be comments on the information presented and/or additional direction to the appropriate team or advisory body.

- a) Review of Groundfish Priorities: At the April meeting, the Council assigned priorities for Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and staff to work on several groundfish issues (see Attachment G.11.a.). Staff will provide a brief overview at this time and, at the end of the meeting, review the status of the various tasks. Additional guidance and priorities can be assigned at that time.
- b) Recreational Fishery Data Collection Issues: The Recreational Fishery Information Network (RecFIN) program is engaged in an evaluation of its current components - the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) and the various state agency recreational data collection programs. Included in that evaluation is an assessment of the data needed by the states and Council for management. RecFIN will address the ability of the current state sampling programs and the MRFSS to meet those needs. Dr. Dave Van Vorhees will be explaining the MRFSS program at a presentation on Tuesday evening (7 p.m., Mt. Hood Ballroom). During the Council session, Mr. Russell Porter, RecFIN Chairman will present a brief summary of the evaluation process begun by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and the states. He will also discuss the RecFIN plans to address this issue. To assist with this process, RecFIN would like input from the Council on recreational data it expects to need for management purposes.
- c) Fixed Gear Sablefish Industry Meeting: The fixed gear sablefish industry held a meeting in Portland on June 1 and 2. Both permit stacking and the development of individual quota programs were addressed. Mr. Frank Warrens will report on the results from this meeting.
- d) Ability to Address Permit Stacking in 1999 for 2000: Given the priorities established by the Council at its April meeting, ability to address permit stacking for the year 2000 is limited. Council staff will report on this issue.
- e) Experimental Setnet Landings as Qualification for Sablefish Tier Assignment: A fisher who participated in the experimental setnet fishery in the mid 1980s has requested the Council consider those landings in qualifying for a tier assignment for the fixed gear sablefish fishery (Public Comment G.2.). A regulatory amendment would be required to make the requested change. Mr. Bill Robinson will report on the history of this issue.
- f) Industry Survey of Buyback Program: At its April meeting, the Council encouraged industry members to conduct an industry survey to assess the level of interest in a Pacific coast groundfish trawl buyback program. Mr. Pete Leipzig of Fisherman's Marketing Association will report on the results of his questionnaire (See Attachment G.2.a.).
- g) Process Required to Allow Use of Open Access Hook-and-Line Gear by Fixed Gear Limited Entry Permit Holders: In April, the Council received a suggestion that limited entry fixed gear permit holders be allowed to use alternative (open access) gears to harvest the full amount of any limited entry trip limit. Many species cannot be caught with traditional longline and pot gear. Current regulations allow limited entry vessels to use open access gear, but only up to the open access limits. The change would allow them to take the (larger) limited entry limit with open access gears. NMFS will advise the Council about what Council and NMFS actions would be necessary to make this change.

- h) Harvest Policy Review: Earlier this year, two workshops were held to discuss revision of the default harvest rate (F) used for groundfish. Preliminary investigations indicate current harvest policies (F_{35%} and F_{40%}) may not adequately protect some stocks. Members of the GMT, Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP), and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), and public have participated in these meetings, but there is currently no scientific consensus on the issue nor consensus on how to proceed in developing and reviewing such a change. The Council may want to recommend a time frame and appropriate review procedure.
- i) Rockfish Stock Status: Dr. Stephen Ralston will present an overview of the current stock status of rockfish.
- j) Bycatch Issues: The Council asked the GAP to review the trawl gear survey prepared by the Ad Hoc Trawl Legal Gear Committee. The committee had hoped to have started conducting the survey already but has been delayed. GAP comments are expected.

Council Action:

1. Recommendations as appropriate.

Reference Materials:

- 1. Industry Questionnaire on Buyback Program (Attachment G.2.a.).
- 2. Public Comments (Public Comment G.2.).

PFMC
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