

## INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS, INCLUDING ENGLISH SOLE AND REDBANDED ROCKFISH

Situation: In November 1999, the Council established three minor rockfish categories in order to protect overfished and depleted rockfish stocks while providing as much access as possible to healthier stocks. The Council listed the individual rockfish species included in the nearshore, shelf, and slope rockfish categories. Management measures for large and small footrope trawl gears were approved for each rockfish category and other species associated with each category. A primary objective of this management approach is to reduce fishing activities in areas where canary rockfish would likely be caught. Restrictions on shelf flatfish species were included in the management program; there is no poundage limit for "all other flatfish," but small footrope trawl gear is required. This means vessels fishing with large footrope trawl gear, even if they operate on the continental slope outside the area of concern, are not allowed to keep any of these flatfish. Unfortunately, some healthy flatfish stocks such as English sole extend into deeper water where they are taken incidentally by vessels targeting slope species (see Public Comment B.7.). The question is, how can we adjust the trip limit so vessels fishing with large footrope gear may keep their incidental catch of English sole without allowing targeting? Redbanded rockfish has also been identified as a species encountered in the large footrope trawl fishery on the slope.

It may be appropriate to reclassify redbanded rockfish as a slope species rather than a shelf species. In any case, the Council should consider providing an allowance for this species in the large footrope trip limits.

### **Council Action:**

#### **1. Adjust trip limits as necessary.**

#### Reference Materials:

1. Correspondence from Coos Bay Trawlers Association (Public Comment B.7.).

PFMC  
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