

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT  
ON MULTI-YEAR MANAGEMENT CYCLE

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) discussed the issue of multi-year management with Council staff and representatives of NMFS.

The GAP recognizes the current one-year management process has led to an overwhelming workload for Council staff and advisors. This has been exacerbated by recent court decisions that add new steps to the management process. As a result, other issues which should be of high priority for the Council have been put aside. Further, potential advancements in scientific research have been foregone as scientists deal with the requirements of groundfish management.

A majority of the GAP, therefore, believes that movement to a multi-year management cycle is needed and the Council should take the necessary steps to prepare an amendment to the Pacific groundfish fishery management plan (FMP) to accomplish this goal. The amendment should include a range of options such as those described in Exhibit E.9, Attachment 1. The GAP recognizes there are positive and negative implications resulting from all of the options listed and chose not to thoroughly review them at this time until the Council decides whether to proceed with a FMP amendment.

The GAP also strongly supported maintaining the existing groundfish season start date of January 1<sup>st</sup>, regardless of whether the Council chooses to pursue multi-year management options. Fishery business decisions and fishing strategies have long been based on a January 1<sup>st</sup> start date and a change will cause unnecessary disruption without providing any savings in time or workload. Further, changing the season start date could cause problems for groundfish catch monitoring and tracking, as well as making decisions on inseason management. Since sound inseason changes will be crucial in implementing multi-year management, we should not be taking arbitrary steps to reduce the validity of inseason analysis.

PFMC  
04/10/02