

## AMENDMENT 17 - MULTI-YEAR MANAGEMENT

Situation: In response to the increasing complexity of the groundfish management process and a court decision requiring National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to publish the proposed annual specifications and management measures in the *Federal Register* for public comment before publishing a final rule implementing these specifications and management measures, the Council initiated Amendment 17 to the Pacific Coast groundfish fishery management plan (FMP).

Amendment 17 has several goals, including: optimizing development of specifications and management measures, providing more time for work on other critical issues (e.g., strategic plan implementation), and providing adequate time for public notice and comment during the NMFS review period. The amendment includes five alternative management schedules, with various options for setting specifications and management measures, the number and schedule of Council meetings for developing specifications and measures, fishing year start dates, schedules for conducting new and updated groundfish stock assessments, and the effects of using one-year optimum yields versus two-year optimum yields within a biennial framework.

In June, the Council reviewed the draft environmental assessment (EA) for Amendment 17 and identified a preferred alternative: biennial management with a three-meeting process and a January 1 fishing year start (Option 3 in the June 2002 draft). The Council asked for additional information, including: socioeconomic analysis, description of transition from current management to the new process, and discussion of the effects of using one-year optimum yields versus two-year optimum yields within a biennial framework.

At this meeting, the Council will review new information developed since the June meeting. The Council is scheduled to further consider the management alternatives available in Amendment 17 and provide guidance for further development of the EA and analytical decision documents. It is anticipated final action on Amendment 17 will occur at the November 2002 meeting.

### Council Action:

#### 1. Further consideration of management alternatives.

#### Reference Materials:

1. Exhibit C.9, Attachment 1.

#### Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum Overview
- b. NMFS Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Further Consideration of Management Alternatives

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### Groundfish Fishery Strategic Plan (GFSP) Consistency Analysis

The purposes of Amendment 17 (optimizing the groundfish management process and providing for adequate public notice and comment) are in line with GFSP goals for the Council process. These goals include: establishing and maintaining a management process that is transparent, participatory, understandable, accessible, consistent, effective, credible, and adaptable; providing a public forum that can respond in a timely way to the needs of the resource and to the communities and individuals who depend on them; and establishing a long-term view with clear, measurable goals and objectives.

PFMC  
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2. Exhibit C.9.c, Supplemental GAP Report.
3. Exhibit C.9.b, Supplemental NMFS Report.