

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
PACIFIC SARDINE FISHERY UPDATE

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) requests that the Council recommend NMFS trigger the reallocation of unused sardine allocation 50/50 between the two management sub-areas as provided in the fishery management plan (FMP).

Furthermore, the CPSAS discussed allocation issues for the 2003 season and beyond. A majority of the CPSAS recognizes there are problems associated with the allocation system in place. A majority of the CPSAS urges the Council to begin the process to implement a regulatory or plan amendment at the November 2002 Council meeting. This effort would require Council direction during this meeting to the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) in order to begin the process. The CPSAS agrees that the purpose of the alternative actions proposed seek to achieve full utilization of the harvest guideline which has not occurred under the federal FMP.

The CPSAS proposes the following allocation options should be forwarded to the CPSMT for analysis:

1. Status quo.
2. Change only current re-allocation date.
 - a. August 1
 - b. September 1
3. Change current sub-area definitions.
 - a. Change only line from Piedras Blancas North to Pt. Arena
4. Change current allocation percentages.
 - a. 50/50
5. Implement three sub-quotas vs. two.
6. Give discretion to NMFS Regional Administrator to reallocate annually from a set-aside based on certain criteria (i.e., social and/or economic hardship).
7. Modify FMP language to establish an inseason adjustment mechanism to modify subarea quotas taking into account the harvest in the respective subareas.
8. Eliminate allocation entirely (coast-wide quota).

The CPSAS reiterates its past recommendations that additional research on Pacific Northwest stocks is necessary, and fishery dependent data from the Oregon and Washington fisheries should be incorporated into the sardine stock assessment. The CPSAS once again recommends the Council support the continued efforts of the Tri-National Sardine Forum. The CPSAS supports and recognizes the need to research the sardine stock composition by a swept trawl survey and an egg pump survey to assess spawning rates in the Pacific Northwest. We believe this research is critical given recent increases in northwest harvest levels and will aid in better understanding of the coastwide sardine biomass. The CPSAS requests the Council urge NMFS to fund this research in 2003.