

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
AMENDMENT 17 - MULTI-YEAR MANAGEMENT

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a presentation from Ms. Yvonne de Reyner of the NMFS Northwest Region regarding final action on Amendment 17 to the Pacific groundfish fishery management plan (FMP) and makes the following recommendations.

The GAP continues to support Alternative 3, which would provide for biennial management with a season start date of January 1st. As the GAP has previously noted, this will provide the advantages of a more relaxed management process, allow the Council to address a variety of issues which it now must delay due to workload imperatives, enable the use of relatively current science, and provide the least economic disruption to participants in the fishery.

The GAP examined the issue of establishing optimum yields (OYs) for either a two-year period (January 1 of year one to December 31 of year 2) or for two consecutive one-year periods. The GAP is cognizant of problems with being able to access up to date harvest data, including, but not limited to, recreational harvest data in some areas, and how the delay in data acquisition could effect both the establishment of OYs and inseason adjustments. The GAP believes that setting a two-year OY would provide the most flexibility for harvest managers and harvesters. However, in order to provide a safety factor to avoid over-harvest and early termination of fisheries; the GAP recommends harvests be managed so that no more than 60% of the OY be attained in the first year. This should ensure sufficient opportunity to achieve OY, as required under the Magnuson-Stevens Act while preventing overfishing and early termination of fishing opportunities in the second year of the biennium.

PFMC
10/30/02