

**GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
INSEASON MANAGEMENT RESPONSE POLICY**

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the recommendations of the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and the Ad Hoc Groundfish Information Policy Committee on establishing an inseason management response policy.

In general, the GAP agrees that attempting to establish inseason changes in March, which are designed to either attain or stay within optimum yield levels, is far too uncertain a process. While mistakes or major modeling errors need to be corrected, adjusting such things as cumulative limits or seasons, based on soft data from the first month or two of the year, should be avoided at the March meeting.

However, the GAP is not comfortable waiting until the June meeting in all cases. An adjustment recommended in June would not go into effect until after the beginning of July, even with NMFS staff working overtime. Commercial and recreational fishermen could lose one or two months of good early summer weather. If adjustments were recommended in April, the Council would have the advantage of two months of hard data and over a month of soft data. They would know if the winter fisheries were more - or less - active and productive than normal. With the new monitoring program adopted by the GMT, we would not have the risk of major effort increases going undetected.

The GAP believes that considering April as the first potential meeting for inseason adjustments is warranted and urges the Council to modify the proposed policy accordingly.

PFMC
03/08/05