

FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 11--SARDINE ALLOCATION

The Council is working to implement a comprehensive, long-term allocation framework to apportion the annual Pacific sardine harvest guideline among the various sectors of the sardine fishery. The resulting Amendment 11 to the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is intended to achieve optimal utilization of the resource and equitable allocation of harvest opportunity. The Pacific sardine resource is healthy and abundant, supporting fisheries in California, Oregon, and Washington.

The original Pacific sardine allocation formula, implemented in the CPS FMP in 1998, was incorporated into Federal management from existing California State law and was designed to balance fishing opportunity between the Southern California-based fishery and the Monterey-based fishery. As the Pacific sardine biomass expanded, fisheries developed in the Pacific Northwest. With this expansion, under the original formula, the northern area allocation was shared by Monterey-, Oregon-, and Washington-based fisheries. Oregon and Washington fishery interests expressed concern to the Council that the original allocation framework did not provide optimal harvest opportunity to the respective fishery sectors. In 2003, the Council recommended and NMFS implemented an interim framework for allocating sardine for the 2003 and 2004 fishing seasons, and also in 2005 if the 2005 harvest guideline was at least 90% of the 2003 harvest guideline. Section 1.2 of the Preliminary Alternatives Analysis (Agenda Item F.2.b) provides additional information on the history of Pacific sardine allocation and the need for the proposed action.

At the November 2004 meeting, the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) presented several program objectives and a suite of alternative allocation formulae. The Council adopted program objectives and allocation alternatives for analysis, including the recommendations of the CPSAS. Chapter 2 of the Preliminary Alternatives Analysis (Agenda Item F.2.b) presents a description of the program objectives and allocation alternatives adopted for analysis by the Council.

For the analysis, the Council gave specific direction to the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT), including: (1) analyze each alternative in a consistent manner; (2) review differential impacts on northern and southern sectors for each alternative; (3) review effects of high and low catch years by sector for each alternative; (4) review resulting effects at various harvest guideline levels ranging from 25,000 - 200,000 mt (at appropriate intervals) for each alternative; and (5) at the discretion of the CPSMT, combine aspects of the various alternatives to create new alternatives that meet program objectives.

Preliminary analyses conducted by the CPSMT are presented in the Preliminary Alternatives Analysis (Agenda Item F.2.b). As with the interim allocation framework, this proposed action is not anticipated to have significant adverse biological impacts or create resource conservation concerns (see Agenda Item F.2.b, Chapter 1). Potentially significant effects evaluated in the Alternatives Analysis are confined to economic impacts associated with harvest opportunities

between fishery sectors and attainment of the harvest guideline (see Agenda Item F.2.b, Chapter 3), and impacts to protected resources, namely salmon stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act. (see Agenda Item F.2.b, Chapter 4).

The Council will hear reports from NMFS, as well as receive advice from the Council advisory bodies and the public, and adopt a range of Pacific sardine allocation alternatives for public review. The Council is scheduled to adopt a preferred allocation alternative at the June 12-17, 2005 Council meeting in Foster City, California.

Council Task:

Adopt a Range of Sardine Allocation Alternatives for Public Review

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.2.b, NMFS Report: Preliminary Alternatives Analysis for the Allocation of Pacific Sardine Harvest Guideline, Amendment 11 to the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan.
2. Agenda Item F.2.d, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. NMFS Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Adopt a Range of Sardine Allocation Alternatives for Public Review

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