

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

Groundfish Workload Priorities

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) considered the outline of groundfish workload priorities in [Attachment 3](#) (Agenda Item F.5., April 2015) with respect to not including time for groundfish issues at the March 2016 Council meeting. The GMT is concerned that having a meeting where groundfish items are not discussed, as was the case in March 2015, will simply spread the same number of groundfish issues over fewer meetings. Based on the number and scope of issues expected in 2015, the GMT anticipates we will need additional time outside of Council meetings to meet, discuss, and generate recommendations for Council consideration (e.g., publically noticed conference calls and webinars). The GMT hopes that future workload priorities can be adjusted such that all discussions and recommendations can be generated at Council meetings where we have the most productive discussions with each other, advisory bodies, and the public.

June 2015 Schedule

The draft proposed June Council meeting agenda ([Agenda Item F.5., Attachment 2](#)) currently includes eleven groundfish agenda items. The GMT expects to provide comment on nine of those agenda items. Unless the Council has other guidance on GMT priorities, we are not planning on providing input on the Permit Stacking Cost Recovery or the NMFS Report agenda items. We anticipate the following additional work in preparation for or at the June meeting:

- There will be a review of the trawl individual fishing quota (IFQ) model by the Scientific and Statistical (SSC) which is scheduled for Saturday, June 13. Several members of the GMT will be involved in that review.
- We request that the SSC consider big skate mortality rates at the June Council meeting. As requested by the SSC, the GMT will do a literature review of published research on discard mortality rates for skates and provide a summary of that information for the SSC's consideration.
- We request time on the SSC's June agenda for a review of the GMT's analysis of the probability of exceeding a harvest limit. This analysis has been a valuable tool for the GMT in describing policy risk to the Council.

The GMT requests an 8 a.m. start time on Thursday, June 11. We may also need to have a noticed conference call or webinar prior to that meeting, similar to the GMT's preparation for the April meeting.

Year at a Glance Schedule ([Agenda Item F.5., Attachment 1](#))

September

The current Year-at-a-Glance document has nine groundfish agenda items. As in June, there may be one or two items the GMT will not provide reports on; however, there are agenda items that could be complicated and intensive. Additionally, the GMT will be working on some preparations for the 2017-2018 biennial harvest specifications and management measures process.

November 2015

There are eleven groundfish agenda items preliminarily identified for November. Included in the list of candidate agenda items are deliberations for the 2017-2018 biennial harvest specification and management measures process and evaluation of proposed exempted fishing permits, both of which tend to be time and effort intensive.

March 2016

The current Year-at-a-Glance document ([Agenda Item F.5., Attachment 1](#)) has an update on the 2017-2018 biennial harvest specifications and management measures as the only groundfish agenda item. The GMT believes there is value in having this briefing, as anticipated in Council Operating Procedure 9, to get some initial input or identify any emerging problems/issues in the biennial process, which potentially can be resolved in a March Council action.

There were no groundfish items on the March 2015 agenda. This only worked as well as it did, in terms of groundfish workload items and processes, due to the GMT having a weeklong meeting in February as well as a publicly noticed half day conference call prior to the April Council meetings. This created a much more intensive workload at this meeting. Spreading the GMT's workload to more meetings will allow more deliberate progress advancing groundfish initiatives.

The GMT also discussed whether there might be merit in requesting consideration for an inseason agenda item in March. It's typically too early for trip limit increases, however we generally have the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program Groundfish Mortality Report delivered in November and the nearshore/non-nearshore model updates typically delivered in January or February. This inseason could be structured to be informational, with room for action if a conservation issue is identified. We could also consider carryover at the March meeting understanding that the data would be preliminary.

Summary

The GMT provides this input for Council consideration when discussing future meeting agenda and workload planning. **The GMT requests Council guidance on our anticipated upcoming workload. If the Council could identify those items of the highest priority for GMT input on, that would be helpful. Additionally, if there are any items that the Council does not anticipate needing GMT input on; identifying those would be helpful as well.**

PFMC
04/16/15