

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) considered future workload and planning documents and offers the following suggestions:

- 1. Canary rockfish annual catch limit (ACL) increase to 250 mt:** The GAP originally requested this change under the inseason agenda item, since we are in a mid-biennial harvest specifications cycle and the stock assessment shows canary has been rebuilt. However, given subsequent conversations with Mr. Frank Lockhart and NMFS staff, the GAP understands the timing of implementing this request and the potential displacement of other work will make it impractical at this time. The GAP would prefer to see the 2017-18 biennial harvest specifications implemented on Jan. 1 and not be delayed.

However, we do see value in pursuing a fishery management plan (FMP) amendment to cover instances in which the ACL should be changed mid-specifications cycle as a result of a stock being rebuilt (“green light”). If this could be added to the 2017-18 spex process, it would be worthwhile so long as the overall spex process is completed on time.

- 2. Midwater sport fishery:** Referencing [D.1.a, Supplemental NMFS report 5 on the midwater recreational sport fishery](#), the GAP appreciates the effort to complete the environmental assessment and have a final preferred alternative for the November 2015 Council meeting. We support this schedule and ask that it remain in place.
- 3. November Council meeting date:** We reiterate our request from [April 2015](#) that the November meeting dates change to the first week of November so members of the GAP who participate in the California Dungeness crab fishery can attend.
- 4. Big skate/skate complex:** The GAP suggests big skate continue to be managed with trip limits while gathering scientific data to better inform how management should occur.
- 5. Jan/Feb recreational opening south of Pt. Conception:** A number of years ago, as a result of bocaccio being declared overfished, recreational fishing for bottomfish, including rockfishes, sheepshead and whitefish was closed for the months of January and February in the area south of Pt. Conception to the Mexican border. This has caused hardships for the tourist-oriented fleets that depend on having something to catch in those months. These fleets have already been impacted by the loss of fishing grounds to the California Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) process and the change of size limits for kelp and sand bass. When bocaccio is certified rebuilt, we request the Council consider re-opening January and February to the Southern California recreational fleet.

- 6. Harvest policy change:** During discussions about stock assessments, the GAP realized that in the case of darkblotched, we are in a situation in which the stock is above the overfished threshold but still below the 40-10 harvest policy zone and therefore, still in a rebuilding plan. The GAP requests the Council consider examining a harvest policy change for species that are above the overfished threshold but below the 40-10 zone.

PFMC
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