

AMENDMENT 4 TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR WEST COAST  
FISHERIES FOR HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS FMP)

In March 2016, the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) recommended a “housekeeping” amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS FMP) to update out of date information in the document ([Agenda Item I.3.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report](#), March 2016) such as references to state regulations, management unit stock structures, and estimates of maximum sustainable yield. In June 2016, under Agenda Item D.4, Initial Scoping of Biennial Specifications and Management Reference Points and Management Measures, the Council tasked the HMSMT with: 1) making “housekeeping” changes to the HMS FMP to update or correct dated information, 2) publishing up-to-date values for HMS stock biological reference points in the Stock Assessment Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) Report, and 3) responding to the requests contained in the Center for Biological Diversity’s (CBD) petition for additional domestic actions regarding Pacific bluefin tuna that NMFS referred to the Council by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). With respect to CBD’s petition, the Council ultimately agreed with NMFS’s conclusion that additional domestic management measures are unnecessary but did decide that Pacific bluefin should be prioritized as part of the task of updating biological reference points. In September 2016, the HMSMT took up the task of reviewing and revising biological reference points ([Agenda Item J.3.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report 2](#), September 2016) and plans to continue this work over the coming year. The Council also decided that these tasks do not need to be completed as part of the biennial process, which would have culminated in November 2016.

The HMSMT has worked with Council staff to draft proposed “housekeeping” amendment language (Attachment 1). Changes are proposed in Chapter 1, Introduction; Chapter 4, Preventing Overfishing and Achieving Optimum Yield; and Chapter 6, Management Measures. Chapter 8, Research and Data Needed for Management is proposed to be deleted with recommendations periodically reported in the annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) document. Updating these recommendations would be timed to provide source material for the Council’s Research and Data Needs Document, which is produced every five years per Council Operating Procedure 12. The introductory section of Attachment 1 summarizes the proposed changes.

The changes to Chapter 4 should facilitate the task of reviewing and revising required biological reference points including status determination criteria (SDC), which are used by the Council and NMFS to determine if a stock is subject to overfishing or overfished. The HMSMT plans to continue working on this task in 2017.

NMFS has also been reviewing its process for making status determinations and notifying the Council when it has determined that a stock is subject to overfishing or overfished. In the case of internationally managed stocks, these notifications trigger a Council response as described in Magnuson-Stevens Act section 304(i). NMFS plans to submit a supplemental report discussing its status determination process and how to better align it with the Council process.

At this meeting, the Council should provide guidance to the HMSMT and Council staff on the proposed changes to FMP text under this amendment.

**Council Action:**

**Adopt Proposed HMS FMP Amendment 4 Language for Public Review and Provide Further Guidance.**

**Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item J.4, Attachment 1: Fishery Management Plan For U.S. West Coast Fisheries For Highly Migratory Species; Amendment 4: “Housekeeping” Changes (Draft For Council Review) (*Electronic Only*).

**Agenda Order:**

- J.4 Amendment 4 to the Fishery Management Plan for West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS FMP) Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
  - b. Public Comment
  - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Proposed HMS FMP Amendment 4 Language for Public Review and Provide Further Guidance.

PFMC  
02/09/17