

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT
ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

Under Agenda Item C.5, Final Sardine Assessment and Management Measures for the 2018-2019 Sardine Fishery, the Council moved to direct the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) to evaluate why there is a prescribed value for incidental take for the live bait fishery and bring a purpose and need statement to the Council and recommendations on whether potential changes to Section 5.1.4 of the CPS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) should be considered at a future Council meeting.

This motion is in response to the potential that the Sardine fishery could be declared overfished with only a minor decline in the upcoming 2019 biomass estimate. If that occurs, the CPS FMP would prohibit any directed live bait fishing and would automatically limit incidental Sardine take in live bait fisheries to 15% of any load. This would, in effect, prohibit the use of Sardines as bait.

Live bait is necessary to support recreational fishing in California. According to the most recent National Marine Fisheries Service assessment, the recreational fishery accounts for more than \$1.2 Billion in value to the State and more than \$1.4 Billion in additional durable goods expenditures (Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2015, NOAA Technical Memorandum MFS-F/SPO-170, May 2017). Without a consistent supply of live bait, the State would realize huge losses in income and recreational opportunity.

As such, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife requests that the CPSMT work as quickly as possible on recommendations and that the Council receive their input and discuss potential alternatives at the June, 2018 meeting. To facilitate that, CDFW requests that a CPSMT webinar or meeting to discuss this be planned no later than the month of May. Following that, CDFW requests that the necessary meetings are placed on the Council agenda so that any changes can be implemented prior to July 1, 2019.