

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
AMENDMENT 17 LIVE BAIT ALLOWANCE – FINAL ACTION

In a joint meeting on November 3, 2018 with the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT), the CPS Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) heard a presentation summarizing the CPSMT report on Amendment 17, Live Bait Fishery Allowance (Agenda Item E.3.a, Supplemental CPSMT Report 1).

The CPSAS commends the CPSMT for their work on the proposal to amend the CPS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the live bait fishery. The CPSAS believes Alternative 2, removing the 15 percent incidental take restriction, is warranted along with the proposed FMP revisions to Sections 4.6.2.1 and 5.1.4 in Attachment 1 of the CPSMT report. This change provides flexibility and discretion to the Council to approve management measures as needed, after considering CPSMT analyses and other scientific and socio-economic information. After implementation of Amendment 8, extra layers of precaution were implemented in Amendment 13, including Overfishing Limits (OFL) and Annual Catch Limits (ACL).

The Council would still retain the ability to manage a directed live bait fishery. For example, the Council could prohibit directed harvest or could set incidental limits or other harvest restrictions. Further, the Council and NMFS would be required to develop a rebuilding plan for any overfished stock.

The CPSAS would also like to thank the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for working with southern California live bait fleet to resolve catch accounting issues. At a recent meeting, the live bait fleet agreed to participate in a mandatory catch reporting program using some form of electronic input.

The Council should be aware of the critical importance of these fish to recreational anglers in southern California when considering their decision to amend the FMP to allow for directed live bait fishing if a stock falls below minimum stock size threshold. According to NOAA statistics, in 2015, marine recreational anglers spent \$1.5 billion on fishing activities, adding an additional \$1.3 billion of economic value and support of approximately 16,000 full and part-time jobs.

The CPSAS reminds the Council that the live bait sector would be prevented from harvesting sardine for live bait if limited to 15 percent incidental landings. In addition, as the CPSMT noted in its report, the biological impacts would remain generally the same regardless of which Alternative is selected.