

BIENNIAL HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES –
PRELIMINARY ACTION

The Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP), as amended, describes a biennial three-meeting process under which the Council may consider the status of HMS stocks, the basis for determinations made by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the status of stocks, and the implementation of management measures to further FMP objectives. At the September 2018 Council meeting, NMFS reported estimates of maximum sustainable yield and related status determination criteria (SDC) ([Agenda Item H.4.a, NMFS Report 1](#)). SDC include the maximum fishing mortality threshold, used to assess whether a stock is subject to overfishing, and the minimum stock size threshold, used to assess whether a stock is overfished. In response, the Council directed the HMS Management Team to develop a Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) report for Council consideration, incorporating the estimates of maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and SDC used by NMFS. The attached HMSMT Report 1 contains the section of the SAFE report covering stock status. (Other sections of the SAFE are maintained on the [Council website](#) and updated periodically as new information becomes available.) The Council also requested its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) review the suitability of the estimates and selected proxies for the SDCs for making status determinations and report to the Council at this meeting. Based on these reports, the Council has the opportunity to make recommendations to NMFS on the use of status determination criteria for management.

Pursuant to section 304(i) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, if NMFS determines that a stock is overfished or approaching an overfished condition “due to excessive international fishing pressure, and for which there are no management measures to end international overfishing under an international agreement to which the United States is a party,” the Council must within one year:

- (A) develop recommendations for domestic regulations to address the relative impact of fishing vessels of the United States on the stock and, if developed by a Council, the Council shall submit such recommendations to the Secretary; and
- (B) develop and submit recommendations to the Secretary of State, and to the Congress, for international actions that will end overfishing in the fishery and rebuild the affected stocks, taking into account the relative impact of vessels of other nations and vessels of the United States on the relevant stock.

Based on the SDC reported in the HMS SAFE, NMFS may notify the Council of the obligations described in MSA section 304(i) for Pacific bluefin tuna and the Eastern Pacific Ocean stock of yellowfin tuna. The Council may begin considering its recommendations at this meeting and finalize them at the March 2019 meeting, as outlined in the HMS FMP.

Council Action:

Review Status Determination Criteria and Adopt Recommendations to NMFS, Department of State, and Congress for International Measures to End Overfishing and/or Rebuild Stocks and Preliminary Proposed Regulations for Domestic Fishery Management.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item J.3.a, HMSMT Report 1: HMS Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Report Section on Stock Status.

Agenda Order:

- J.3 Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures – Preliminary Action Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Review Status Determination Criteria and Adopt Recommendations to NMFS, Department of State, and Congress for International Measures to End Overfishing and/or Rebuild Stocks and Preliminary Proposed Regulations for Domestic Fishery Management

PFMC
10/09/18