

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS FOR 2021-2022 INCLUDING FINAL OVERFISHING  
LIMITS AND ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCHES

The Groundfish Advisory Panel (GAP) received a briefing from PFMC Staff Officer John DeVore and Patrick Mirick, with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Groundfish Management Team (GMT).

#### Shortbelly rockfish

The GAP finds the range of alternatives in [GMT Report 2](#) sufficient. The GAP agrees with the GMT recommendation in that report and **recommends Alternative 1, of 3,000 mt, as the preliminary preferred alternative**. The GAP provided substantial rationale for an annual catch limit of 3,000 mt in [our statement under Agenda Item H.4](#) at this meeting.

#### Oregon black rockfish

The GAP agrees with the GMT and **recommends Alternative 1** (case-by-case 2021-2022 acceptable biological catches [ABCs]; set equal to the 2020 ABC) as the preliminary preferred alternative for Oregon black rockfish. The GAP understands this departure from a normal Sigma/P\* protocol should be used sparingly, as stated in the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) report.

#### Cowcod south of 40° 10 N. lat.

The GAP agrees with the GMT for cowcod and **recommends Alternative 1, ABC P\* 0.40) as the preliminary preferred alternative**. This is a departure from the default harvest control rule, but this alternative allows for some precaution while still allowing for some fishing opportunity. The resulting ACLs also allow the option to set an annual catch target for cowcod, as the Council has done in the past.

#### Petrale

The GAP discussed the range of alternatives for petrale and concludes, by reference, our rationale provided in [September 2019](#) for the **No Action alternative, a P\* of 0.45**. Further, the GAP discussed the GMT consideration of a more precautionary approach in either alternative 1 or alternative 2.

The GAP has noted several times during the biennial harvest specifications process, particularly in our [September 2019 Report 1](#), that petrale is an extremely important species for the bottom trawl fleet. GMT Report 2 shows the economic impacts of petrale in the 2021-22 biennium as significantly higher in terms of revenue, income and jobs. The projected impact over 10 years under Alternatives 1 and 2 is about -100 mt a year; however, under the No Action alternative, there is an increase of about 400 mt in the next biennium.

As identified in [Attachment 2](#), petrale is still projected to remain above target biomass in 10 years under the No Action alternative. Moreover, the yield curve in the new assessment indicates the

stock is past the point of peak production in the current population and more exploitable fish are succumbing to natural mortality. These older fish will die due to either natural mortality or to being caught; the industry prefers harvesting them.

Additionally, the GAP anticipates advocating for another petrale assessment soon, which will provide updated stock status information to inform future biennial harvest specifications.

### Sablefish

The GAP agrees with the GMT and recommends **Alternative 1, a P\* of 0.45** for sablefish, as noted in [GMT Report 2](#) under this agenda item. Sablefish is now out of the precautionary zone and there is no reason to apply a more precautionary P\* value.

The GAP also discussed whether using the standard long-term average or the 5-year rolling average, as discussed in [GMT Report 1](#), would be most applicable for managing the apportionment of sablefish north and south of 36° N. lat. The GAP understands the SSC sees no increased biological risk with either option. Given the current state of the fishery, the GAP agrees using a 5-year rolling average seems most reasonable, even though roughly 400 mt would shift from the south to the north. This recommendation could be changed based on an updated stock assessment or during the biennial harvest specifications process.

Using the higher P\* of 0.45 would also help minimize the loss of sablefish south of 36° N. lat. due to using the 5-year rolling average.

### Canary rockfish, English sole, shortspine thornyheads, brown rockfish

Referencing [Attachment 1](#), the GAP recommends staying with default harvest control rules for these four stocks.

PFMC  
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