

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the draft Year-at-a-Glance ([Agenda Item C.5., Attachment 1](#)) and draft April Council Agenda ([Agenda Item C.5., Attachment 2](#)), discussed the GMT's workload, and offers the following thoughts.

GMT Turnover

The GMT notes that almost half of our members are being replaced this year with new staff. Given the steep learning curve on groundfish management issues, we expect to invest a significant amount of time at and in between meetings training new team members. It typically takes new members one biennial cycle to gain a comprehensive understanding of the management process, analytical framework, and data resources for groundfish actions. The GMT will not have the same capacity to maintain recent workload levels, and it may take us some time, depending on further staff transitions, to get back to performing at that level. The GMT asks the Council considers this when discussing the GMT workload.

The GMT recommends the Council take a holistic look at the scope of potential benefits and the distribution of those benefits for all items on the year at a glance, and focus requests for analytical support on priority topics and alternatives. The Council should use the Groundfish Workload and New Management Measure Update and Prioritization Agenda item as framework for this discussion.

April Council Agenda

Given the high volume of reports that will be generated for the harvest specification and management measures agenda items, the GMT recommends the following scheduling approach (as shown in the draft April Agenda) be considered to allow for efficiency:

1. having two full days of GMT scheduled before floor discussion begins to allow the team maximum preparation time.
2. having a full day in between harvest specifications final preferred alternative and management measures preliminary preferred alternative (PPA), and
3. having management measures PPA spread over 2 days. This spread provides a longer time for the associated advisory bodies and public to comment. It also allows Council members to have until the next day to review the information provided and prepare for discussion.

Year-at-a-Glance

June

The June meeting is when the Council selects a Final Preferred Alternative (FPA) for Fisheries in 2021-2022 Management Measures, along with the final adjustments to EFPs for the upcoming cycle, which is a big lift for advisory bodies and the Council. Unless directed otherwise by the Council, the GMT plans to focus our efforts on these two agenda items, which means we will have limited capacity to provide input on the 9-13 other items tentatively scheduled for June. Given our focus on finalizing harvest specification and management measure analyses, the GMT does not expect to have team members supporting project teams for Gear Switching and Sablefish Area

Management (SAMTAAC) Range of Alternatives, Electronic Monitoring, or any of the four shaded items before June. The GMT suggests the Council consider moving these items to the September and November meetings if there is a need for substantial GMT input and involvement. The GMT suggests delaying the Amendment-21 Trawl/Non-Trawl Allocation item until 2022 (see discussion below).

September

The GMT notes the Council is scheduled to begin a review of the limited entry fixed gear sablefish (primary tier fishery) catch share program at the September meeting. The next review of the trawl catch share program is scheduled for 2022. The Council may wish to consider delaying the primary sablefish fishery review one year, to coincide with the trawl catch share program review. The GMT recommends that this review also encompass the Amendment-21 Trawl/Non-Trawl Allocations item currently scheduled for June 2020. This would provide the opportunity to focus a portion of a joint review on the ongoing effectiveness of sablefish management and allocation across these two programs.

PFMC
03/07/20