

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON EMERGENCY ACTION TO
CONSIDER CHANGING SEASONAL PROCESSING LIMITATIONS-FINAL ACTION

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) considered the public comments taken for this issue under other agenda items and reiterates the comments we made under Agenda Items [G.8, inseason](#), and [I.4, future workload planning](#). We repeat those comments here, for clarity:

Mothership covid-19 emergency rule: The GAP supports the request that [MTC and UCB submitted to NMFS](#) to develop an emergency rule to address an unexpected issue in the mothership whiting sector, and we ask that the Council support this request as well. The rule would temporarily allow an at-sea Pacific whiting processing platform to operate as both a mothership and a catcher processor in the same calendar year during the 2020 Pacific whiting season. This is needed because one of the six mothership platforms that had planned to process in 2020 will no longer be using their vessel as a mothership. The three catcher vessels that planned to deliver roughly 24% of the MS sector allocation to them, worth about \$5 million in ex-vessel revenue, no longer have a market. At this late date, the other mothership processors are not able to take on additional deliveries from these vessels, because they have already committed to other vessels. In addition, with the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, other catcher vessels may have limited market opportunity if other MS processors cannot operate. The only vessels likely to serve as replacement motherships or catcher processors are the existing motherships and catcher processors. In order to give potential processors the greatest flexibility and in order to provide opportunity for these three catcher vessels that have been displaced due to COVID-19 pandemic, the GAP supports the request to temporarily change the MS/CP transfer rules for 2020.

PFMC
04/10/20