

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON SARDINE REBUILDING PLAN

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received information about this agenda item from Mr. Kerry Griffin (Pacific Fishery Management Council staff) and reviewed materials in the advance June 2020 Briefing Book. As noted in other advisory body reports, it is the GAP's understanding that additional alternatives are likely to be presented to the Council at this meeting. Based on material in the advance Briefing Book, this report focuses on the zero-harvest alternative (that is, Alternative 2 in [Agenda Item G.1.a, CPSMT Report 1, June 2020](#)).

The GAP does not support Alternative 2 (“zero harvest”) because of the negative collateral impacts that will harm groundfish fisheries that rely on live bait or catch sardine incidental to targeted groundfish fisheries. Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team Report 1 clearly acknowledges that these impacts will occur – “The impacts of this alternative would include socio-economic impacts and would have ripple effects to the recreational fishing sector, CPS fisheries, and other fisheries such as Pacific whiting, which have small levels of sardine incidental catch.” The GAP understands that this is the beginning of the process to develop a sardine rebuilding plan, that the Council may include additional alternatives, and that the rebuilding analysis will document the negative economic impacts of zero harvest. However, the GAP highlights that to its knowledge a zero-harvest alternative has not been included in other rebuilding plans, even for analysis.

When the Council next addresses this issue, the GAP will provide additional comments. At this time, the GAP wants to make it absolutely clear that the Council should not select Alternative 2 (zero harvest) as its preferred alternative because it would harm groundfish fisheries. Moreover, given the boom and bust nature of the sardine stock, where environmental conditions are the primary driver of stock abundance, rebuilding could take upwards of 30 years (even in the absence of fishing). The negative effects of a zero-harvest alternative could be imposed on groundfish fisheries for many, many years without improving the likelihood that the sardine stock will rebuild in a timely manner.

PFMC
06/16/20