

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) reviewed the proposed scheduling of HMS agenda items on the Council's Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance (YAG) Summary (Agenda Item C.7, [Attachment 1](#)) and offers the following recommendations.

Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan (SMMP)

The HMSMT discussed tasks related to the Council's SMMP analyses request (November 2019), to identify additional work and staff needed to complete the assignment. Due to a heavy workload currently scheduled for the virtual November 2020 meeting, the HMSMT requests that the Council reschedule this agenda item for the March 2021 meeting.

Biennial Specifications and Management Measures

Generally, the Biennial Specification and Management Measures agenda item is a three-meeting process. The HMSMT noticed that the YAG does not currently have the third meeting scheduled and recommends the Council add this agenda item to the March 2021 meeting.

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Review

Given the Council's decision to initiate Phase II of the HMS EFH review, the HMSMT recommends scheduling this agenda item for a future Council meeting in 2021, based on the scope of Council's request for the EFH Phase II process.

Scheduling of Advisory Body meetings

The HMSMT struggled in balancing meetings, staff time, and workload during this meeting, as not only were there a large number of agenda items under HMS, but the HMSMT was also interested in, or requested to participate in, discussion of Council agenda items outside of HMS. Two of its members representing their agencies on multiple advisory bodies, as well as an incomplete roster, compounded the HMSMT's difficulty in completing its workload and adequately participating in other areas of Council discussion. The HMSMT understands the constraints of scheduling during in-person meetings, but requests that for future virtual meetings, the Council spread advisory body meetings out over a longer time period prior to the Council's discussion. Staggering of these meetings could reduce overlap of advisory body meeting obligations and provide opportunity for inter-advisory body participation, statement reviews, and responses.

Offshore Wind Energy

The HMSMT supports the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel's recommendation ([Agenda Item J.1.b, Supplemental HMSAS Report 1](#)) that the Council establish an ad hoc working group to focus on offshore wind energy and aquaculture development, as these emergent issues will affect fisheries the Council manages. The HMSMT recommends that the working group be diverse and consist of advisory body members to represent cross-Fishery Management Plan perspectives, as well as representation from the Habitat Committee and Ecosystem Workgroup.