

## COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON METHODOLOGY REVIEW TOPIC SELECTION

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) submitted a statement for the November Advance Briefing Book (Agenda Item H.2.a, CPSAS Report 1), renewing our request that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) support an independent methodology review related to temperature and habitat assumptions made in apportioning “northern” and “southern” sardine stocks. This request followed a similar recommendation made by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) in 2019 to review this topic at the 2020 sardine Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel review, for the reasons explained in our statement.

In pre-Council discussions with Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) leadership and National Marine Fisheries Service management to discuss this request, given the abnormal conditions imposed by the pandemic, all agreed that accomplishing field surveys, including the nearshore, is of primary importance to estimate the sardine biomass and maintain critical coastal pelagic species and ecosystem data streams. Therefore, the CPSAS would like to modify our statement in acknowledgement that the top priority should remain to dedicate the time necessary to accomplish the 2021 field surveys. The CPSAS thanks the SWFSC for its support and acknowledgement of the importance of collaborative survey work involving industry to accomplish the essential nearshore component in 2021.

The CPSAS also notes the Briefing Book statement from the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team on this agenda item (see Agenda Item H.2.a, Supplemental CPSMT Report 1, November 2020), and its recommendation that Council Operating Procedure (COP) 26 be modified to require that proponents notify the Executive Director of their intent to request a new methodology review prior to the first day of the September Council meeting for the Council to retain the methodology review item on the November meeting agenda. This recommendation addresses requests for new reviews, but the CPSAS points out that there also needs to be a framework in a COP to explicitly address the requests for review of existing methods, as we initially requested.

Current COP 26 language does state “...*For existing methodologies that the CPSMT and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) together agree should be reviewed, the proponents of any such methodology should be notified suitably in advance of the appropriate briefing book deadline in order to submit a brief description of the methodology.*” However, this does not provide an explicit process for such a request. We ask that a specific process be included in a COP, whether in COP 26 or elsewhere, that provides an opportunity for advisory bodies to request that the Council recommend an independent review of an existing methodology. This change would enable the CPSAS to comment within the Council process and would provide a pathway to comment on our continuing concerns about assumptions made in existing methodology.