

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON COURT ORDERED
RULEMAKING ON HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE CENTRAL
SUBPOPULATION OF NORTHERN ANCHOVY

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) reviewed the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Report and Proposed Rule (Agenda Item H.3, Supplemental Attachment 2, and H.3.a., Supplemental NMFS Report 1). We appreciate the information and detailed reanalysis and rationale presented in the NMFS Proposed Rule.

In light of the increased abundance of anchovy and the Council's ongoing efforts, we encourage the Council to support the Proposed Rule, and include in its comments a description of work accomplished to date and a projected timeline to review and potentially update the Proposed Rule reference points (i.e. overfishing limit (OFL) of 119,153 mt, acceptable biological catch (ABC) of 29,788 mt, and annual catch limit (ACL) of 25,000 mt).

Regarding comments and recommendations on proposed additional measures to:

[1] limit the effectiveness of the ACL in this Proposed Rule to 3 or 4 years, and
[2] implement an accountability measure that would automatically reduce the ACL (i.e. 10,000 mt) if the stock falls below a prescribed level (i.e. 100,000 mt) for two consecutive years, a majority of the CPSAS recommends that the Council continue its stepwise progress and support a management workshop as a high priority to gather data essential to produce an integrated population model to assess biomass (incorporating multiple indices of abundance, not only acoustic trawl surveys). The workshop and related modeling can determine the frequency of assessments, changes to OFL and ABC based on best available science (determined by the Scientific and Statistical Committee and the CPS Management Team) and accountability measures to further protect anchovy, if necessary.

A minority of the CPSAS concurs with the majority that the Council's efforts to update anchovy management should continue, but also supports limiting the effectiveness of the Proposed Rule to one year, in keeping with an annual specifications process for the central subpopulation of northern anchovy. A minority further supports inclusion of an accountability measure wherein the ACL would be reduced in response to biomass falling below a specified threshold.

Thank you for your consideration.

PFMC
11/18/20