

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENTS AND COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP, Panel) received an overview of this agenda item from Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Deputy Director Mr. Mike Burner and reviewed the briefing book documents. We offer the following comments.

General discussion

The GAP discussed the current Panel composition, the current Council Operating Procedures (COPs) regarding advisory bodies (ABs), and how the GAP operates. Panel members feel the current composition of the GAP is satisfactory and comprises a membership with sufficient geographic, sector, fishery, tribal, and conservation representation. Furthermore, the GAP frequently receives significant public participation, whether during an in-person venue or virtually, and allows for public comment and discussion during each agenda item. The Panel appreciates this public participation and input.

Regarding the concern about majority/minority issues in Panel statements, the GAP notes it has not always been able to reach consensus on some agenda items. This is not limited to GAP discussions; other ABs have had similar divisions on especially contentious issues. However, the GAP has always been clear as to why – or why not – the Panel statements have clearly delineated the majority/minority statements or whether we could not reach consensus. We will continue to provide this perspective to the Council so members can gain a better understanding of the background discussions in the GAP.

Additionally, the GAP disagrees with the public comment letter regarding term limits. We reference the [Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel report](#) under this agenda item that notes the difficulties of bringing new people into the process. While it is important to bring in new information and knowledge, term limits are not the sole process to achieve that change. The Council can choose to appoint new AB members every three years or when an AB member resigns. The GAP recognizes the individual panel members' dedication to this time-consuming process and is grateful for many members' years of experience and historical knowledge base. Establishing term limits could have the opposite effect: inclusion of a new member for the sake of filling a seat could result in points of view contrary to the goal of contributing to successful, sustainable fisheries management. Recruiting members to fill AB seats already is difficult given the personal and business sacrifices required to attend meetings and commitments to understanding the agenda materials.

For the above reasons, the Panel believes the current composition of the GAP is working well and suggests no changes to the composition or governing COPs at this time.

Specific AB recommendations

Groundfish Endangered Species Workgroup

As the GAP noted in our [statement under Agenda Item G.4](#), Groundfish ESA Workgroup (GESW, Workgroup) Report, the Panel recommends a fishery representative seat be formally added to the GESW. The Workgroup noted in its [report](#) the value of having a groundfish industry member available at its recent meeting:

“We very much appreciate the protected species professionals for continuing to support these integrative discussions. The Council appointed Bob Eder as an industry representative for this Workgroup meeting. The Workgroup found Mr. Eder’s input to be very valuable as he helped provide an understanding of how the gear is fished and how vessels operate. The Workgroup is supportive of an industry member having a more permanent position on the Workgroup in the future.”

The GAP would like to thank Mr. Bob Eder for his service.

Scientific and Statistical Committee Groundfish Subcommittee

Given the concerns about data-moderate stock assessments, the GAP agrees with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) recommendation to create avenues for advisory body participation in SSC Groundfish Subcommittee discussions during which data-moderate reviews are conducted, as noted in the [GMT’s report under Agenda Item G.5](#).

PFMC

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