

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the documents under this agenda item and offers the following comments.

March 2022 Council agenda

Referencing the [draft March Council meeting agenda](#), the GAP recommends the following:

1. Unshade G.9, Sablefish Gear Switching Review update for March.
2. Unshade G.10, the Fixed Gear Logbooks update for March. NMFS is already scheduling meetings with fishermen, and this may proceed to implementation earlier than expected in 2023.

April 2022 Council agenda

Referencing the [draft April Council meeting agenda](#), the GAP recommends the following:

1. Unshade G.6, the Whiting Treaty Implementation item for April. U.S.-Canada Hake Agreement decisions are expected to have occurred. This is a routine part of the Council process.
2. Unshade G.8, the action to adopt a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) for the Non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) item in April and subsequently schedule it for final action in September. The GAP recognizes the analytical burden may increase based on Council action under Agenda Item E.6 at this meeting. However, our preference is to maintain the current schedule because of the importance of this agenda item.

Council meetings in 2022

Referencing the [preliminary Year-at-a-Glance calendar](#) under this agenda item, the GAP recommends the following:

1. Retain the LEFG sablefish tier fishery five-year review on the calendar because this is an important topic that should be addressed in a timely manner.
2. Unshade the Non-trawl RCA in September for selection of a final preferred alternative (FPA).
3. Unshade the Sablefish Gear-Switching PPA agenda item for June. The GAP supports maintaining the PPA action in June and understands the June agenda item will be influenced by Council discussion and action under Agenda Item G.9, sablefish gear switching review update, in March.
4. Continue to move the process forward for getting the Emley-Platt exempted fishing permit (EFP) into regulation. The GAP is unclear whether the Council will proceed with moving the Emley-Platt Yellowtail Rockfish Jig EFP into regulation as a stand-alone item or whether it is part of the non-trawl RCA process. The GAP notes this is one pathway, an important pathway, to increase effort on the shelf and take pressure off

nearshore stocks. The use of midwater gears to access shelf stocks will become imperative in the next few years and thus, the GAP would like to see this continue to move forward in 2022.

5. The GAP understands the trawl catch share program review scoping needs to be scheduled sometime in 2022 (it is currently a candidate item for March). The GAP affirms its interest in getting the scoping process started so industry members can discuss the extent of the review process necessary to meet the original intention of an efficient program and successful fishery. However, we also note that mothership utilization and gear-switching, two items from the first five-year review, have yet to be finalized (although mothership utilization FPA is scheduled for March 2022). Changes in National Marine Fisheries Service and Council staffing, new advisory body members, and competing workload-intensive agenda items (e.g., biennial harvest specifications and management measures) may preclude a comprehensive scoping agenda item early in the year. Therefore, the GAP suggests scheduling the initial program review item, possibly in March, to discuss process and general review content. The GAP would like to see the inclusion of the opportunity to make recommendations on program improvements as part of the process.

PFMC
11/21/2021