

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 Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council's) Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance (YAG) Summary (Agenda Item C.10, [Attachment 1](#)) and offers the following comments for Council consideration.

Regarding candidate agenda items for the March 2022 Council meeting, the HMSMT recommends scheduling the Swordfish Fishery Management and Monitoring Plan (SMMP) item for the March meeting but removing the HMS Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Review -- Phase 2, given the current lack of staffing to support work required to complete the assignment. The SMMP agenda item provides an opportunity to coordinate work on various Council assignments under its scope, including drift gillnet (DGN) hard caps and bycatch performance metrics, and could also support completion of the Council's November 2019 assignment regarding sources of West Coast swordfish supply.

The HMSMT believes that the June 2022 Council meeting is a better fit than the March meeting to allow for completing an analysis to support selection of a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) on DGN hard caps. The HMSMT believes this is consistent with the approach the Council suggested under the Agenda Item H.3 discussion. If the Council desires, the HMSMT could provide a DGN hard cap analysis update under the SMMP agenda item at the March 2022 Council meeting. The HMSMT further believes that scheduling a joint discussion between the HMSMT and Enforcement Consultants in conjunction with the SMMP agenda item could be helpful for producing an analysis of the range of alternatives for the Council.

Given the amount of HMSMT meeting time that may be required to complete the work on hard caps, analysis of sources of West Coast swordfish supply and bycatch performance metrics, the HMSMT requires significant meeting time to finish these complex assignments on a timely basis.

HMSMT Recommendations to the Council

- Regarding candidate agenda items on the March 2022 Council meeting agenda, drop the EFH Review -- Phase 2 but include the SMMP agenda item, and consider an update on development of a hard caps analysis under that agenda item.
- Schedule selection of a PPA for DGN hard caps on the June 2022 Council meeting agenda.
- Schedule interim HMSMT meetings as needed to complete work related to SMMP-related agenda items on the Council's YAG.