

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
FIXED GEAR LOGBOOKS – FINAL ACTION

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received an overview from Ms. Lynn Massey of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and reviewed the associated agenda items (Agenda Items [E.5 Situation Summary](#) and [E.5.a NMFS Report 1](#)). The GMT provides the following comments for the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council's) consideration.

The GMT agrees with the NMFS recommendation that the logbook requirement should apply to the “non-trawl” groundfish fleets as opposed to the “fixed gear” groundfish fleets. The GMT agrees with the NMFS recommendation to only include the Directed Open Access, Limited Entry Fixed Gear (LEFG) Primary Sablefish, LEFG trip limit, and Individual Fishing Quota Gear Switching sectors in the initial roll-out.

However, the GMT notes that these are not the only sectors that retain and/or discard groundfish. The GMT has particular concerns about the lack of data regarding groundfish catches and discards in the salmon troll fishery, as the team has been getting more requests to allow additional groundfish retention in this fishery in recent years. With the lack of discard information, logbooks in the salmon troll fishery could provide information that is currently unavailable on impacts to groundfish from that fishery, as there is also no observer coverage or electronic monitoring. Therefore, the salmon troll fishery may be a candidate if the Council considers expanding the logbook requirement to additional non-trawl fisheries for groundfish. In addition, if an Open Access vessel retains groundfish as well as other non-groundfish species (e.g., mackerel), that vessel would not be required to submit a logbook based on the logbook requirement proposed by NMFS, because the trip would not be considered as a Directed Open Access trip. Therefore, the GMT would be interested in expanding the Directed Open Access definition in the future to account for these situations. Finally, logbook information from Incidental Open Access Fisheries would enable more accurate estimates of mortality in these sectors, thus allowing the GMT to better account for this mortality source in their off-the-top set-asides.

The GMT notes that an additional benefit of the logbook program is that it can provide additional information about the impacts of opening the non-trawl rockfish conservation area to new gear types. In addition, it would help meet Reasonable and Prudent Measure 4 of the 2017 Biological Opinion for Seabirds ([FWS O1E0FWOO-2017-F-03 16](#)), which states that NMFS shall “[i]mplement a logbook requirement for longline fisheries, especially for those fisheries with low observer coverage rates.”