

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS (EFPs) FOR 2022-2023 – FINAL ACTION

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed three proposals to renew exempted fishing permits (EFPs) for Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) from the California Wetfish Producers Association (Agenda Item E.2, Attachments 1 and 2) and the West Coast Pelagic Conservation Group (Agenda Item E.2, Attachment 3). The California Wetfish Producers Association EFPs are to obtain point sets to validate the aerial survey estimates of CPS biomass in the nearshore area and collect biological samples from a limited directed Pacific sardine fishery. The West Coast Pelagic Conservation Group EFP intends to continue complementary acoustic sampling to quantify the CPS assemblage in waters inaccessible to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's fisheries science vessel *Reuben Lasker*. All three proposals were previously reviewed by the SSC, and all three proposals continue work and employ similar methods that were used in previous years. The SSC notes that future EFPs submitted for renewal should include a section to explain how the data that were collected are or will be used in CPS management.

The SSC supports the approval of the three EFPs and commends the applicants for their dedication to the continued research needed to improve assessment of the Northern Subpopulation of Pacific Sardine and the Central Subpopulation of Northern Anchovy.

The SSC repeats its call (see [Agenda Item H.1.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1, November 2020](#)) that the Council Operating Procedure (COP) 23 explicitly outline the role of the SSC to review the scientific component(s) of EFPs. The SSC recommends modifying COP23 to have the CPS Management Team conduct an initial review of EFP applications and identify any scientific or experimental design elements of the EFP application that need SSC review. This will allow the SSC to focus on the scientific aspects of the EFP and will be similar to the process that is used to review Highly Migratory Species and Groundfish EFPs.

PFMC
04/08/22