

## SABLEFISH GEAR SWITCHING

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) discussions on limiting the use of fixed gear in the trawl individual fishing quota (IFQ) fishery (gear switching) began as part of its review of the trawl catch share program, conducted in 2016 and 2017. As a result of that process, the Council adopted a gear switching control date (September 15, 2017) and appointed the Sablefish Management and Trawl Allocation Attainment Committee (SaMTAAC) to address the issues of trawl allocation under attainment and potential responses, including a limitation on gear switching. At its September 2020 meeting, the Council considered the SaMTAAC's final report, adopted a purpose and need statement, and committed to completing deliberations on the issue, including a final decision on whether to adopt No Action or an action alternative. At its April 2021 meeting, the Council set 29 percent as a maximum level of gear switching that would be used to guide further development of the action alternatives. At its September 2021 meeting, the Council adopted a range of alternatives for analysis, largely based on those put forward by the SaMTAAC. The range of alternatives included: no action, Alternative 1, which would limit gear switching by creating gear-specific sablefish quota shares (any-gear quota shares and trawl-only quota shares), and Alternative 2, which would limit gear switching by creating gear switching endorsements that would be placed on limited entry trawl permits. Under Alternative 2, vessels fishing under permits with gear switching endorsements would have greater gear switching opportunities than vessels without endorsed permits. See Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 1 for a simple schematic overview of the alternatives. At its September 2021 meeting, the Council also discussed the potential need for a check-in at a subsequent meeting, as needed.

Following the September 2021 meeting, working from the Council motions, staff developed a description of the alternatives and identified questions that needed to be addressed before an analysis could proceed. In February of this year, the alternatives (Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 2) were posted to the Council's [gear switching and trawl allocation attainment webpage](#) along with a [recorded presentation](#) describing them. Also included in the alternatives document and in a [second recorded presentation](#) were a description of some of the complexities of the alternatives and issues that need to be resolved in order to proceed with the analysis.

At this meeting, the Council should address the questions about the alternatives raised by staff (Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 3) and any other concerns identified about the design of the two alternatives adopted at the September 2021 meeting. Additionally, an outline of the analysis has been developed, including links to previously developed analysis (Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 4). This agenda item also provides an opportunity for Council members to review and comment on plans for the analysis. There will be further opportunity to request additional analysis when a preliminary preferred alternative is selected—currently scheduled for November 2022.

This agenda item has two parts. Part 1 is scheduled to occur on Saturday, June 11 with the overview, reports and comments of management entities and advisory bodies, and public comment. Council action will occur during Part 2, which is scheduled for Sunday, June 12.

**Council Action:**

1. Refine alternatives adopted for analysis at the September 2021 meeting, as needed.
2. Provide guidance on analysis, as needed.

**Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 1: Schematic Overview of The Gear Switching Range of Alternatives.
2. Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 2: Range of Gear Switching Alternatives Adopted for Analysis by the Council at Its September 2021 Meeting, February 2022.
3. Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 3: Provisions on Which Council Guidance Is Needed.
4. Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 4: Gear Switching Alternatives Analysis – Annotated Outline.
5. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

**Agenda Order:**

- F.5 Sablefish Gear Switching Jim Seger/Jessi Doerpinghaus  
(Part 1 - *F.5.a and F.5.b on Saturday, then continue Sunday with F.5.c*)
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
  - b. Public Comment
  - c. **Council Action:** Consider Refinement to Alternatives Adopted for Analysis at the September 2021 Meeting and Provide Guidance on Analysis, As Needed
- F.5 Sablefish Gear Switching - (Part 2 - *Continued from Sat.*) Jim Seger/Jessi Doerpinghaus
- c. **Council Action:** Consider Refinement to Alternatives Adopted for Analysis at the September 2021 Meeting and Provide Guidance on Analysis, As Needed

PFMC  
05/16/22