

## GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the draft Year-at-a-Glance (YAG, [C.10, Attachment 1: Pacific Council Workload Planning: Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance Summary](#)) and the draft Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting agendas for [March 2023](#) and [April 2023](#) contained in the advanced briefing book and discussed progress on ongoing groundfish items. Below are some thoughts for consideration.

### **Communication With the GMT**

Several times in the last year, it has come to the GMT's attention that other advisory bodies have expectations for the GMT, specifically in regards to participation in meetings/workshops and/or completing work, that have not been communicated effectively or clearly to the team through the Council process. One example is the inconsistent communication in preparation for, or cancellation of, Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) workshops. Agendas are developed with little to no input from those who will be tasked with presenting, and communication is not directed to the GMT leadership team (i.e., GMT staff officer, chair, and vice chair) to share with the whole team. In the future, we ask for a clearer, consistent line of communication when the GMT is asked to take on additional work or expected to be in attendance. In addition, the Council should also be made aware of the additional tasks and work that is being requested of the GMT so that it can consider the team's overall workload and tasks.

### **March Agenda**

The GMT agrees with the proposed Council schedule, which includes the GMT meeting in person and beginning on Saturday, March 4 or a day ahead of Council. The team finds it valuable to meet for a full day before the Council convenes to front-load work for the week and to be able to engage with Council staff and Council members before the full session demands their attention.

### **April Agenda**

The GMT notes that it is currently not scheduled for all the days that groundfish items are on the floor and recommends adding the GMT (and potentially the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel [GAP]) on April 6 in the current agenda when inseason and gear switching are on the floor. If Sablefish Gear Switching remains on the April agenda as scheduled, the GMT requests that F.1 Council Process and Efficiencies and/or F.2 Equity and Environmental Justice be scheduled later in the week, potentially Thursday, if possible. This would give the GMT more time to prioritize Sablefish Gear Switching on our first meeting day, noting that we are not currently scheduled to meet one day before the Council meeting begins, which is typical.

### **Meeting In Person vs. Virtual**

The GMT understands that the Council budget precludes all advisory bodies attending all meetings in person. When determining if groundfish advisory bodies are going to be virtual or in person, specific agenda items may determine which format is more appropriate. The GMT believes meetings focusing on "routine" agenda items can be held virtually. However, complex items that would benefit from in person communication and coordination between the GMT, GAP, and/or

SSC, should only be scheduled for meetings that groundfish advisory bodies are in person. Examples of complex items that require in person communication and coordination are approval of stock assessments, biennial harvest specifications and management measures, and stock definitions.

Looking at the groundfish items on the Draft YAG included in the advanced briefing book ([Agenda Item C.10, Attachment 1, November 2022](#)) and considering the biennial harvest specifications and management measures process for 2025-26, the GMT provides our thoughts on whether we need to be in person or virtual for meetings through June 2024 (the conclusion of the next biennial process; Table 1). Our thoughts on in person vs. virtual may be modified depending on what groundfish items get scheduled for each meeting:

**Table 1. GMT recommended in person vs. virtual attendance at upcoming Council meetings, with reasoning for the recommendations.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Virtual or In Person</b>	<b>Reasoning/Comments</b>
2023	March	<b>In Person</b>	Based on what is on the current draft YAG in the advanced briefing book
	April	<b>Virtual</b>	We understand there are no rooms available for groundfish advisory bodies. Based on this, the Council may want to consider moving the Gear Switching Final Preferred Alternative (FPA) agenda item to a meeting where at least the GAP can be in person, but historically the GMT and GAP are both in person together.
	June	<b>In Person</b>	Based on what is currently on the draft YAG and items that may be moved to June 2023 from April 2023 (i.e., gear switching), it would be beneficial to have both the GMT and GAP in person.
	September	<b>Prefer in person, but can live with virtual</b>	Based on what is currently on the draft YAG and items that may be moved to June 2023 from April 2023 (i.e., gear switching), it would be beneficial to have both the GMT and GAP in person.
	November	<b>In Person</b>	Because this is an important harvest specifications and management measures meeting, the team would benefit greatly from being in person. It also prepares the GMT for the overwinter analysis and work to support the biennial harvest specifications and management measures.
2024	March	<b>Virtual</b>	This meeting is usually only an update on the biennial process, and the team is comfortable with a virtual format as long as only routine groundfish items are scheduled.
	April	<b>In Person</b>	This is a key meeting during which we finalize the harvest specifications and adopt the preliminary preferred alternatives for 2025-26 management measures. Both of those topics would benefit greatly from an in-person GMT meeting format.
	June	<b>In Person</b>	This meeting finalizes the 2025-26 biennial harvest specifications and management measures process. Similar to April, the team would benefit greatly from being in person.

Due to the large amount of flux that may be happening during this workload conversation, the GMT did not provide a GMT YAG but will plan on doing so at the next Council meeting. However, the GMT notes that the Council has yet to schedule phase 2 of the stock definitions agenda item anytime next year ([Agenda Item C.10, Attachment 1, November 2022](#)).

### Overwinter/Continuing work

Members of the GMT will be participating in a number of ancillary meetings outside of Council meetings and GMT work sessions over the next several months, both as members of the GMT and as part of their other duties. A non-comprehensive list is shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Non-comprehensive meetings and workshops the GMT expects to participate in outside of Council meetings for the remainder of 2022 and 2023, along with expected GMT responsibilities.**

Host	Meeting Purpose	Date(s)	Location	GMT Responsibilities
Oregon Sea Grant	West Coast Sablefish Pot Gear Marking Workshop	November 16, 2022	Virtual	Participate and potentially advise on state-specific information
GMT	Work session on stock definitions	November 28, 2022	Virtual	Begin analysis on stock definitions that will continue in January
	Work session	January 9-13, 2023 (tentative)	In person; location TBD	Continue to work on stock definitions; prepare work for items on 2023 agenda
PSMFC <sup>a/</sup>	RecFIN Technical Committee Meeting	December 6-7, 2022	In person; San Diego, CA	Provide updates on pertinent GMT activities
SSC	Groundfish Subcommittee Meeting to Resolve Accepted Practices for Groundfish Stock Assessments	December 12, 2022	Virtual	Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed
	Using remotely operated vehicle data in stock assessments	TBD	TBD	
IPHC <sup>b/</sup>	Interim Meeting	November 30 - December 1, 2022	Virtual	Participate as part of other job duties
	Annual Meeting	January 23-27, 2023	In person; Victoria, BC	
PFMC <sup>c/</sup>	Non-salmon Groundfish Endangered Species	Spring 2023	Likely in person in Seattle, WA	Participate and/or present report(s) as GMT and as part

Host	Meeting Purpose	Date(s)	Location	GMT Responsibilities
	Act Workgroup Meeting			of other job duties
	Trawl Catch Share Program Review Hearings	Spring 2023 (multiple hearings)	Some in person along the coast, some virtual	Listen to public input and track concerns/requests from industry
PSMFC <sup>a/</sup>	PacFIN/Groundfish Workgroup Meeting	April or May 2023	TBD	Coordinate on data and other commercial groundfish PacFIN needs
SSC	Impact Projection Methodology Review Workshop	Spring 2023 (exact date TBD)	TBD	Coordinate with SSC and bring forward proposed revisions of the sablefish trip limit model for review
	STAR <sup>d/</sup> Panel for CA copper rockfish, rex sole, and shortspine thornyhead	June 5-9, 2023	In person; Seattle, WA	Coordinate with assessment author on fleet structure and management blocks and provide removal assumptions
	STAR <sup>d/</sup> Panel for black rockfish	July 10-14, 2023	In person; Santa Cruz, CA	
	STAR <sup>d/</sup> Panel for petrale sole and canary rockfish	July 24-28, 2023	In person; Seattle, WA	
	Groundfish Subcommittee to prepare for 2025-26 harvest specifications	August 2023	TBD	Participate and advise on groundfish management/regulations, as needed
	Groundfish Mop-up Panel, if needed	September 25-29, 2023	TBD	

- a/ Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission  
b/ International Pacific Halibut Commission  
c/ Pacific Fishery Management Council  
d/ Stock Assessment Review

PFMC  
11/06/22