

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
SABLEFISH POT GEAR MARKING-FEASIBILITY REPORT

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a briefing from Mr. Brian Hooper from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) about a review of the recent workshop on [Sablefish Pot Gear Marking](#), with emphasis on [NMFS Report 3](#).

Based on [NMFS Report 3](#), GAP discussion, and because it is a condition in the Humpback Whale Biological Opinion, the GAP concurs with the NMFS recommendation that “the Council schedule a scoping agenda item for groundfish fixed gear marking (pot and longline) by the March 2024 meeting.” Therefore, the GAP recommends, under Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning, the Council include on the March 2024 agenda scoping for groundfish fixed gear marking (pot and hook-and-line gear).

While the scoping should be inclusive of addressing gear identification and entanglement reduction ideas, the GAP suggests that operationally feasible gear marking, which is aimed at providing the ability to positively attribute fishing activity and gear involved when an entangled whale is encountered, should be the first order of business. New gear marking requirements would facilitate improved understanding of the potential impacts of particular fisheries, which should be done before evaluation and consideration of new measures aimed at reducing whale entanglements. The recent Sablefish Pot Gear Marking workshop identified some ideas to address gear marking and entanglement reduction ideas. The possible regulatory actions to address the ideas raised in the workshop will need to be reviewed by industry and the Council from an enforcement and industry ability to comply with any new requirements.

PFMC
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