

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENTS AND COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the briefing book materials and had discussions regarding the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) actions #8 and #9 in the [Situation Summary](#), specifically to “adopt the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) Harassment Policies, or amend as appropriate, into Council rules and procedures” and to “consider staff recommendations for additional changes intended to foster a respectful work environment.”

The GMT appreciates the Council taking steps to prevent harassment, outline a process for reporting harassment, review allegations of harassment, and take action as appropriate. Clear documentation of expectations and protocols for Council participants to come forward with harassment allegations without fear of retaliation are critical to ensure a harassment free culture and should be incorporated into the Council process.

Attachment 3 of this agenda item indicates that Council staff recommend editing all relevant Council Operating Procedures (COPs) to include protections for all Council participants. The GMT supports this recommendation and concurs with the recommendation put forward by the tribes ([Agenda Item G.5.a, Tribal Report 1, March 2023](#)) to ensure diversity within the group that is to receive reports of harassment. The GMT also concurs with the tribal recommendation that examples of harassment be provided for clarity and consistency of reporting review.

Furthermore, the GMT sees merit in developing advisory body (AB) ground rules, particularly for working through contentious issues in a respectful manner that ensures all voices and perspectives are expressed and heard by the team. **The GMT recommends the development of a ground rules template that ABs can then modify to suit each of their own unique practices and operations.** The GMT appreciates the opportunity for flexibility in developing our own ground rules given that there are enough differences in how we operate compared to other ABs. After final development, the team hopes it will be possible to modify our AB-specific ground rules iteratively or as needed into the future.

Attachment 3 suggests that the Council could encourage each AB to document their unique operations and share them on the Council website, and the GMT is already undertaking this initiative by developing a “continuity book” that includes, for example, documentation of the unique contributions each member makes to the team, the representation of each member outside of Council meetings (e.g., PacFIN, RecFIN), and routine tasks the team accomplishes to support Council actions.

The GMT is concerned that the language proposed to be added to the Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures (SOPP) ([Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 7, March 2023](#)) is the same language verbatim that is proposed to be added to the COP ([Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 6, March 2023](#)). The GMT’s understanding is that the SOPP is intended to be more specific to process procedures and outline the steps to be taken, and by whom, in order to take appropriate action in response to a harassment report. In the proposed language, the GMT also notes the lack of indication that there will be no retaliation or consequence for an individual who brings forward a harassment report, but this is an important component to ensure that employees and participants are encouraged to use the procedures as intended.