

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON COUNCIL MEETING AND PROCESS EFFICIENCIES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) staff white paper ([Agenda Item F.2, Attachment 1, April 2023](#)) and received a briefing from Mr. Todd Phillips of Council staff. The GMT offers the following thoughts in response to the questions posed in the white paper.

The GMT supports maximizing Council flexibility and ability to pivot meeting formats to address unforeseen circumstances (e.g., family emergencies, sickness, weather events, or Covid outbreaks within Council). This can be accomplished through the Council investing in and allowing Advisory Bodies (ABs) access to the two less expensive options ([AnkerWork SR500 Speakerphone](#) and [Meeting Owl® device](#)). Having these options will help Council staff pivot and allow for team member participation when travel is not an option for them due to unexpected events. That said, the team does not support a planned hybrid approach for GMT members ([Agenda Item C.3.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, September 2022](#)). The GMT remains consistent in our preference that team members meet either all in person or all virtual ([Agenda Item C.10.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, November 2021](#)). If the Council decides the team should be virtual, the team hopes to be involved in the process of choosing which meeting(s) would be best virtual, given our expectation of workload and the need to closely collaborate for some items. **The GMT recommends that the format (in person or virtual) the Council chooses for the team be consistent with the format of the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel.**

In June 2022, the GMT tried the “mini ballroom” system unsupported by IT staff in the GMT’s meeting room, and the technological difficulties outweighed the benefits. Without additional IT support, other ABs may have similar challenges if they choose to fully adopt this hybrid approach. The GMT acknowledges that the ability to fund technological improvements or additional IT staff may depend on the Council's ability to find other cost savings, such as costs associated with AB travel during the meetings even when meeting in person.

PFMC
04/02/23