

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON BIENNIAL HARVEST
SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES PROCESS FOR 2025-2026
FISHERIES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received a briefing from Mr. Todd Phillips of Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) staff, reviewed the proposed schedule in [Agenda Item H.7 Attachment 1](#), and offers the following comments.

Schedule

Upon review of Attachment 1, **the GMT supports and recommends the Council adopt the schedule as drafted.**

The GMT advises the Council to adhere to the proposed schedule ([Attachment 1](#)) for successful implementation of regulations by January 1, 2025. Further detail on the rationale behind scheduling can be found in [Agenda Item G.6.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, June 2021](#).

Management Measures

Based on guidance from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the GMT understands that the biennial process should focus on routine management measures that are necessary for the implementation of the harvest specifications (e.g., commercial trip limits, bag limits, and minor adjustments to rockfish conservation areas, etc.).

The GMT notes that [Attachment 2](#) describes the groundfish measures currently prioritized for work by the Council but taken up outside of the biennial process. The recent and significant loss of institutional knowledge on the GMT will likely impact the team's capacity to contribute to the list of actions in [Attachment 2](#) in conjunction with any new management measures that may be added to the 2025-2026 harvest specifications package.

As NMFS has stated in advisory body discussions and on the Council floor, new management measures, i.e., those that have not been analyzed in the past, have the potential to delay the implementation of harvest specifications and other concurrent agenda items. The harvest specifications rulemaking is a large regulatory package that moves on a uniquely truncated timeline (i.e., 6 months). As a result, analysis of new management measures would be limited to the November-February analysis timeline and, consequently, issues may be overlooked and implementation may present challenges. Additionally, the workload and new management measure prioritization exercise is designed to remind the Council of how agenda items interact and is intended to prevent items from superseding other items. Based on this, the GMT suggests avoiding the addition of new management measures in the 2025-2026 harvest specifications process.

The proposed schedule for the 2025-2026 harvest specifications and management measures process calls for the Council to adopt a preliminary range of proposed management measures for inclusion in the biennial process at the September 2023 meeting. We will provide information on potential management measures that we have identified or have been informed of at that meeting.

Potential Draft Rebuilding Analysis

The GMT will work with the appropriate Stock Assessment Team to provide catch streams, as needed, for any potential draft rebuilding analysis.

PFMC

06/22/23