



Pacific Fishery Management Council

7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101 Portland, OR 97220-1384
Phone 503-820-2280 | Toll free 866-806-7204 | Fax 503-820-2299 | www.pcouncil.org
Marc Gorelnik, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 2, 2023

TO: Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel, Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer for Highly Migratory Species

SUBJECT: June 2023 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet June 21-27, 2023, at the Hilton Hotel Vancouver, Washington. Both the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) are scheduled to meet **in person** Saturday through Monday, June 24-26. HMS topics are on the Council agenda on Monday, June 26. Additional meeting information can be found on the Council's [June 2023 Meeting webpage](#).

Summaries of HMS topics and other items of interest on the Council agenda are listed below.

J.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will brief the Council on recent regulatory activities.

J.2 International Management Activities

The Eighth Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) - Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee (NC) Joint Working Group (JWG) Meeting on Pacific Bluefin Management, 19th Regular Session of the Northern Committee, 23rd Plenary Meeting of the International Scientific Committee (ISC), and 101st Meeting of the IATTC are set to occur over the summer. Decisions related to harvest strategies for Pacific bluefin tuna and North Pacific albacore are likely to be made. The ISC Plenary will review new benchmark stock assessments for striped marlin, North Pacific albacore, and swordfish. The Council will also receive a briefing on the recently finalized legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).

J.3 Exempted Fishing Permits – Preliminary

The Council received four exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications for preliminary review. Two of these applications are for standard deep-set buoy gear, which became a legal gear on June 7. Therefore, the applicants do not need an EFP to use the gear and should instead apply for a DSBG-endorsed General HMS Permit. A third application is to test deploying 20 pieces of DSBG, which is more than the authorized number of 10. The fourth application is to test night-set DSBG. In September 2022 the Council discussed deferring consideration on recommending EFPs for variations on DSBG (specifically, four applications reviewed in 2022) until the authorized fishery was in operation. Therefore, the Council may defer consideration of these applications. Reports on 2022 activity from EFP holders are also included under this agenda item. NMFS submitted a report on various EFP-related issues.

J.4 Drift Gillnet Bycatch Performance Report

Since June 2017 the Council has been receiving an annual report from the HMSMT comparing estimated bycatch in the large mesh drift gillnet (DGN) fishery for selected species/species groups against performance metrics. The HMSMT will submit a supplemental report for this purpose using data for calendar years 2020 and 2021.

J.5 Swordfish Fishery Management Workshop – Scoping

In September 2022 the Council discussed organizing a workshop to further the goals of its draft Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan (SMMP). It requested the HMSMT come forward with recommendations on workshop topics. The HMSMT submitted a report with its recommendations on a workshop and the future disposition of the SMMP.

C.3 Marine Planning

The Council's Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met May 18th and received an introductory briefing from Ms. Katie Westfall, NMFS Senior Advisor on Offshore Wind (OSW) energy issues, as well as updates on activities and issues for California, Oregon, and Washington, and a Tribal update. MPC Report 1 is included in the advance Briefing Book materials. The MPC was also scheduled to convene June 6, 2023, to discuss fisheries communications plans (FCPs), which are a requirement for OSW lease holders. The five California OSW lease holders were invited to discuss the timing, schedule, and content of the FCPs. Draft FCPs are expected to be available for public review and comment. The June 6th MPC meeting was originally scheduled to consider the draft Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) off the Oregon Coast. However, the MPC was notified that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will not be ready to present or discuss the draft Oregon WEAs.

C.2 Council and Process Efficiencies

In the third of a series of white papers Council staff lay out a process and schedule for considering changes in Council procedures that would culminate in preparation of the next funding request to NOAA for the 2025-2029 period. Of the many ideas that have been put forward so far under this topic, staff is seeking guidance on which ones it should further develop into concrete proposals.

Those proposals would be initially vetted by the Budget Committee and then taken up by a “committee of the whole” of Council members in a strategic planning meeting. Development of the grant request begins later this year with a final submission deadline next summer; these Council efficiencies deliberations would have to align with that schedule.

C.7 Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

In March 2023, the Council adopted a Harassment Reporting Procedures Policy (posted on the [Rules and Procedures](#) page) and discussed additional steps to promote a respectful and harassment-free work environment. Attachment 6 contains the staff-recommended measures, including COP updates, along with a summary of the Council, Advisory Body, and Tribal comments from [March 2023](#). Under this agenda item, the Council should identify the measures for implementation and next steps.

Finally, as usual, I have included Future Council Agenda and Workload Planning (Agenda Item C.8) in case you wish to comment on the scheduling of HMS items on future agendas.

In addition to the enclosed briefing materials, you may obtain electronic copies of all the meeting materials on our website. We also post supplemental briefing materials on our website as they become available after distribution of the advance briefing book. Public comment is available only in electronic form through the Council’s [e-portal](#). Visit the [June 2023 Meeting webpage](#) to access these materials.

As always, thank you for your service to the Council process.

KRD:rd

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A: Council Meeting Agenda and Executive Director’s Report
2. Agenda Items C: Administrative Matters
3. Agenda Items J: Highly Migratory Species Management
4. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
5. Informational Reports
6. General Information and Council Roster

PFMC
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