

SABLEFISH GEAR SWITCHING –
PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) discussions on limiting the use of non-trawl gear to target sablefish in the trawl individual fishing quota (IFQ) fishery (gear switching) began as part of its review of the Trawl Catch Share Program, finalized in 2017. As a result of the review, the Council adopted a gear switching control date (September 15, 2017) and subsequently began a process that led to development a range of alternatives across several Council meetings starting in September 2021 and most recently at the June 2023 meeting.

At previous meetings it had been challenging for the Council to give the needed consideration to both refining the alternatives and selecting a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA). Therefore, for the June 2023 meeting the Council decided to focus its attention on the selection of an initial PPA (iPPA) and then to do further work on refining that iPPA, if needed, before selecting its PPA. At its June 2023 meeting the Council adopted two iPPAs. The current alternatives are as follows, with the iPPAs noted:

- No Action (iPPA)
- Action Alternative 1: Gear-Specific Quota Share
- Action Alternative 2: Gear-Specific Quota Pounds (iPPA)
- Action Alternative 3: Seasonal Management of Gear Switching

A summary and comparison of the alternatives is provided as Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 1 and a detailed description and discussion of the alternatives is provided as Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 2. The last section of Attachment 2 also includes all passed motions pertaining to specification of the range of alternatives. Analysis is provided in Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 3. Section 1.4 of the analysis identified key sections that may be of particular interest. The impact summary table to be included in the regulatory impact review section will be provided as a supplement.

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to select a PPA which would be sent out with the analysis for public comment, after which the Council would select its final preferred alternative (FPA) at its March 2024 meeting. If the Council were to select No Action as the PPA, it could either send that out for public comment before determination of the FPA or decide that there would be no further work or discussion at this time (i.e., this would be the last meeting). If Alternative 1 or 2 are selected as PPAs, PPA options within the alternative should also be selected. Also, if an action alternative is selected as a PPA, there are some additional questions to be addressed that are identified in Attachment 2 in the discussion sections for each alternative.

Council Action:

- 1. Select a PPA and preliminary preferred options.**
- 2. Address outstanding questions related to the PPA, if necessary (see discussion sections of Attachment 2).**
- 3. Provide other guidance on the alternatives, as needed.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 1: Synopsis of Gear Switching Alternatives, Options, Comparisons, and Issues.
2. Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 2: Range of Gear Switching Alternatives Adopted for Analysis.
3. Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 3 (**Electronic Only**): Analysis to Inform Selection of Preliminary Preferred Alternative for Sablefish Gear Switching.
4. *Agenda Item E.4, Supplemental Attachment 4: Supplemental Analysis of the Sablefish Gear Switching Alternatives.*
5. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- E.4 Sablefish Gear Switching – Preliminary Preferred Alternative (*Part 1 - Saturday*) Jim Seger/Jessi Doerpinghaus
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** (*Scheduled for Part 2 on Monday, November 6*)
- E.4 Sablefish Gear Switching – Preliminary Preferred Alternative (*Part 2 – Monday*) Jim Seger/Jessi Doerpinghaus
- c. **Council Action:** Adopt a Preliminary Preferred Alternative

PFMC
10/11/23