

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the draft Year-At-A-Glance (YAAG; [Agenda Item C.8, Attachment 1](#)) and the draft March ([Agenda Item C.8, Attachment 2](#)) and April agendas ([Agenda Item C.8, Attachment 3](#)) contained in the advanced briefing book, as well as the status of ongoing projects, and offer the following for consideration by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council).

If the Council anticipates a particular need for GMT comment on any of the non-groundfish items, the team requests that the Council clearly indicate the need(s) to help the team balance any new request with current groundfish workload. Specifically, for example, the GMT seeks clarity on what is expected of the team for Agenda Item G.2, Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative 4 on the March agenda, as well as expectations for GMT involvement prior to March 2024.

March Agenda

Several items currently on the March agenda may require additional time to accomplish Council action:

- **E.3 Initial Stock assessment and Terms of Reference (TOR):** Given the discussion under E.2 during this November meeting, the GMT anticipates a high level of public comment as well as a robust Council discussion on the TOR, therefore the team suggests 2 hours allocated to this agenda item. The GMT expects to discuss ideas for potential TOR revisions during our January 2024 work meeting and will provide comments in March based on that discussion.
- **E.7 Inseason Adjustments:** Given that management measures to limit quillback rockfish mortality in the 2024 recreational fishery south of 42° N. lat. will be considered during the March meeting, the GMT suggests allocating more time than what is currently on the schedule. We also anticipate the potential for substantial public comment during this agenda item.

April Agenda

The GMT understands that the Gear Switching item will be removed from the March agenda and added to the April agenda; therefore, to free up some time, **the GMT recommends shifting F.5 Workload and New Management Measure Priorities item until after June.**

In April, the Council is scheduled to adopt Final Preferred Alternatives (FPA) for groundfish harvest specifications (Agenda Item F.3), which will subsequently be followed by adoption of the Preliminary Preferred Alternatives (PPA) for groundfish management measures (Agenda Item F.4). The outcome of Council action under F.3 will generally inform action under F.4, as well as inform GMT discussion and reports for F.4. Creating as much temporal distance between those two items during the week provides the GMT with as much time as possible to populate tables, make recommendations, and conduct any other work to inform action under F.4 and provides more time for the Council to review briefing book materials. **Therefore, the GMT recommends switching the order of Agenda Items F.2 and F.3 on the April agenda.**

Year-at-a-Glance

With several recently assessed stocks likely to constrain fisheries in the near future (e.g., shortspine thornyhead, canary rockfish), as well as one stock likely to be declared overfished, it is likely that inseason will require more time in future Council meetings. The Council should weigh this consideration with other groundfish items when scheduling the YAAG. Due to the actions taken in November 2023 to reduce commercial fishing impacts to California quillback rockfish, and anticipated changes to the recreational fishery in March 2024, it is likely that the Council will need to reassess the time inseason will require in 2024 to consider changes to trip limits and management measures to align with potential effort shift and to ensure California quillback rockfish mortality remains within harvest limits. However, the GMT suggests the inseason agenda item only needs to be scheduled on one day until the June meeting, where the GMT suggests two inseason agenda items might be necessary. The team appreciates the Council scheduling two parts at this meeting and notes that it helped the team accomplish the work required of us to support the Council's inseason action, while balancing our other workload.

Additional Meetings

Members of the GMT will also be participating in a number of ancillary meetings and work sessions outside of Council meetings over the next several months, both as members of the GMT and as part of their other duties. A non-comprehensive list is found in Table 1. The GMT requests an in-person January 2024 work meeting.

Table 1. Non-comprehensive meetings and workshops the GMT expects to participate in outside of Council meetings for 2024 and 2025, along with expected GMT responsibilities.

Host	Meeting Purpose	Date(s)	Location	GMT Responsibilities
SSC	Groundfish Stock Assessment Process Review	Early January 2024	Virtual	Advise on retrospective input on the 2023 stock assessment process
	Groundfish Review of Revisions to the Terms of Reference and Accepted Practices Documents (2025-2026)	January 17-18, 2024	Virtual	Advise on TOR revisions to clarify GMT role in stock assessment review process
Council	GMT Overwinter Meeting	Jan. 29-Feb 2, 2024	Portland, OR	Finish harvest specifications analysis and draft write up before the March advanced briefing book
RecFIN	Technical Committee Meeting	Nov. 14-15, 2023	San Diego, CA	Participate and provide information
IPHC ^{a/}	Interim/Annual Meeting	Nov. 30-Dec 1, 2023 / Jan. 22-26, 2024	Virtual / Anchorage AK	Participate as part of other job duties
SSC	Meeting to Discuss Methods for the State/Federal Catch Proportion Analysis (Recreational and Commercial)	Spring 2024	TBD	Advise as needed
	Groundfish Methodology Review of FT-NIRS Method for Estimating fish Ages Utilized in Stock Assessments	June 2024		Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed
	Review Phase 2 Stock Definition Analysis	Before September Council Meeting	TBD	Advise as needed
	Sablefish Management Strategy Evaluation workshop	2024 (TBD)	TBD	Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed
	Proposed Workshop to Develop Alternative Harvest Control Rules for Spiny Dogfish	2024 (TBD)	TBD	Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed
	Approaches to Deal with Large Closed Areas and Other Spatial Issues in Stock Assessments	By November 2024 (TBD)	TBD	Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed
	Use of ROV Data in Stock Assessments Workshop	2024 (TBD)	TBD	Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed

Host	Meeting Purpose	Date(s)	Location	GMT Responsibilities
TNC ^{b/}	Ecosystem and Climate Information Workshop with GMT & GAP	2024 GMT recommends Feb. 13-14	TBD	Participate and provide information, data, and/or analysis, as needed

^{a/} International Pacific Halibut Commission

^{b/} The Nature Conservancy

PFMC
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