

FIXED GEAR MARKING AND ENTANGLEMENT RISK REDUCTION –
PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

In September 2024, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) recommended a series of alternatives for analysis on gear marking and other entanglement risk reduction measures for vessels that operate under the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan that use pot and longline gear. For gear marking, the Council recommended that gear-specific markings be considered for both buoys and lines. Entanglement risk reduction measures include limiting the amount of surface gear and surface line. Additionally, the Council included an administrative change for escape panels on pot gear and development of a best practices guide by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Attachment 1 provides an overview of the alternatives including options, staff proposed clarifications, and questions for the Council to consider prior to final action (scheduled for June 2024). Attachment 2 is the analytical document that the Council and its advisory bodies should use in developing their recommendations for a preliminary preferred alternative. NMFS also provides a report with recommendations for the Council to consider when selecting a preliminary preferred alternative.

At this meeting, the Council should consider the information provided as well as any advisory body or public comments and adopt preliminary preferred alternatives, if possible. The Council is scheduled for final action of this item in June 2024.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt preliminary preferred alternative(s) for gear marking, including buoy and line marking alternatives.**
- 2. Provide guidance relative to staff proposed clarification and questions as described in Attachment 1.**
- 3. Adopt preliminary preferred alternative(s) for entanglement risk reduction measures of surface gear requirements and surface line limitation.**
- 4. Adopt a preliminary preferred alternative for escape panel regulations.**
- 5. Provide guidance relative to the development of a best practices guide.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.6, Attachment 1 – Fixed Gear Marking and Entanglement Risk Reduction-Alternatives.
2. Agenda Item F.6, Attachment 2- Fixed Gear Marking and Entanglement Risk Reduction Initial Regulatory Impact Review/Regulatory Flexibility Act/Magnuson Stevens Act Document.
3. Agenda Item F.6.a, NMFS Report 1.
4. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- F.6 Fixed Gear Marking and Entanglement Risk Reduction Jessi Doerpinghaus
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt a Preliminary Preferred Alternative

PFMC
02/05/24