

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON HMS ROADMAP
WORKSHOP - FINAL PLANNING

Recommendations:

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) requests that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council):

- 1. Adopt the HMS Roadmap goals listed in the [HMS Management Team \(HMSMT\) Report 1 submitted to the Advanced Briefing Book](#).**
- 2. Defer any consideration of the HMS Roadmap Action items listed in the HMSMT Report. We think it is premature for the Council to begin prioritizing action items.**
- 3. Provide necessary guidance to allow finalizing the list of definitions provided in the HMSMT Supplemental Report to facilitate workshop discussion. Proposed revisions to the definitions provided by the HMSMT are included as an attachment to this Report.**
- 4. Focus the proposed HMS Roadmap workshop on development and testing of alternative gear types for catching HMS, recognizing the imminent need for drift gillnet (DGN) fishery participants to transition to other economically viable gear types.**
- 5. Maximize industry stakeholder participation through significant outreach and minimizing out-of-pocket costs to participate in the workshop. Holding the workshop in conjunction with the June Council meeting would be appropriate.**

The HMSAS acknowledges that a potential HMSMT Supplemental Report may impact some of the recommendations above and/or the rationale below. One disadvantage of the virtual meeting format is the inability to have direct conversations with the HMSMT when necessary.

HMS Roadmap Goals

The HMSAS generally supports the HMS Roadmap goals developed by the HMSMT, including new goal E, and recommends the Council adopt them at this meeting. We reiterate our position that an HMS Roadmap consider all HMS fisheries and dependent communities. [Our statement submitted on the Roadmap in November](#) highlighted the precarious state of our HMS fisheries and the need to support ALL HMS fisheries under the Council's authority. These goals will help in defining the purpose of the proposed workshop and its outcomes. Time should not be spent at the workshop further debating and refining these goals.

HMS Roadmap Action Items

The HMSAS reviewed the extensive list of action items in the HMSMT Report. We believe it is premature to refine this list or prioritize which items the Council will take on. The HMS Roadmap workshop will shed light on what actions should be initiated in the near to medium term. The Council should revisit potential action items after the workshop during your September meeting under the HMS Roadmap Workshop – Report agenda item in the [Preliminary Year-At-A-Glance Summary](#).

Definition of Terms

The HMSAS reviewed the term list shared by the HMSMT before they finalized their Supplemental Report. We request any guidance given to the HMSMT to assist in finalizing these definitions incorporate our suggested edits as provided in the Attachment to this Report. We understand these definitions are intended to guide the HMS Roadmap and facilitate discussion at the Roadmap workshop and therefore recommend that these definitions be finalized well in advance of the workshop.

HMS Roadmap Workshop

The HMSAS believes the workshop should focus on the enabling conditions needed to encourage and accelerate gear innovations and the development of additional HMS fishing opportunities consistent with the HMS Roadmap goals that we recommend the Council adopt at this meeting. We strongly discourage further discussion of the goals at the workshop since it would divert from the key outcome just outlined. We expect a workshop focus on alternative gear types would be furthered by developing recommended parameters the Council wants to see for activities undertaken through exempted fishing permits (EFPs). This could include general specification of gear characteristics and/or acceptable impacts, in terms of bycatch, of such gear. Some EFPs approved by the Council recently have included restrictions making the prosecution of those EFPs impractical and/or uneconomical. In this regard, Goal C focusing on economic viability, is essential. Supporting innovative ways to harvest underutilized resources based on performance and the best available science should be prioritized. Science-based hardcaps on protected species (as determined under Endangered Species Act/Marine Mammal Protection Act for example) could be a useful approach in considering appropriate terms and conditions.

Any alternative gear development effort stemming from the workshop should recognize the imminent need for DGN fishery participants to transition to economically viable alternative gear types given that fishery is set to close in less than three years. In that regard, it should be recognized that transition costs are likely to extend beyond simply purchasing new gear and/or making modifications to fishing vessels to accommodate such gear. These costs should be part of the considerations brought up at the workshop.

The HMSAS views stakeholder participation in the workshop as essential and encourages the Council to consider some incentives to facilitate participation such as providing lunch and offsetting some basic travel costs (e.g., parking). The HMSAS also emphasizes the need for broad outreach to foster stakeholder engagement across a variety of channels (online publicity, invitations by email and snail mail). Both in-person and online participation should be provided. Finally, the Council should consider how a steering committee, including affected stakeholders, can participate in workshop planning.

PFMC
03/01/24

Attachment – Proposed Revisions to HMSMT provided definitions

1. **Bycatch:** For the discussion here the term “bycatch” is used in a broad context and includes marine mammals and birds, as well as fish (see definition 8 below) that are harvested in a fishery but are not sold or kept for personal use, including economic and regulatory discards (see definitions 4 and 11 below).
2. **Climate-Ready Fishery:** A fishery that incorporates available climate and ecosystem environmental data to inform management decisions and the resilience of communities that depend on it.
3. **Commercial Volume of Landings:** A volume of fish or seafood harvested and landed over a specified time period which is necessary for commercial operations to be economically viable .
4. **Economic discards:** For discussion here, fish which are harvested in a fishery, but which are not retained because they are of an undesirable size, sex, or quality, or for other economic reasons.
5. **Economic production:** The use of technology, expert knowledge, labor and energy in the harvesting, processing, and distribution of fish and seafood products for commercial purposes.
6. **Economic viability:** The ability to generate sustained revenue to cover operating costs, including a source of livelihood to producers, and providing a sufficient return on capital investment such that it encourages ongoing participation in the activity.
7. **Economic waste:** A loss of economic value due to inefficient allocation or utilization of resources, such as using production processes with higher operating costs or which produce less catch or revenues than the most efficient methods available.
8. **Fish:** The term “fish” means finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, and all other forms of marine animal and plant life other than marine mammals and birds.
9. **High quality:** Seafood harvested in a method that reduces lactic acid buildup and handled according to best practices which produces a product that commands a higher price.
10. **Minimize:** Reduce to a level that meets conservation goals while considering the balance between conservation and economic viability, as it relates to bycatch, discards, and negative impacts to protected and prohibited species.
11. **Regulatory discards:** Regulatory discards means fish harvested in a fishery which fishermen are required by regulation to discard whenever caught, or are required by regulation to retain but not sell.
12. **Supporting resilience in fishery operations:** Decision making processes that encourage innovation and adaptability of fisheries and fishing practices, management flexibility, and promotion of economic viability.

13. **Underutilized Resource:** A situation where available resources are not being fully utilized or harvested efficiently to their maximum potential as allowed under applicable laws and regulations.

14. **Trade Leakage/Transfer Effect:** The set of aggregate shifts induced by natural resource decision- making – in activity footprints, and consequences for stakeholders and communities, target and non-target species, ecological integrity and overall performance, at whatever scale, from local to global. In the context of west coast HMS fisheries, the reduction of domestically supplied swordfish is causing an increase in imports from nations with far less stringent management regimes on protected species and other species of concern.