

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON PACIFIC
SARDINE HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR
2024-2025 – FINAL ACTION

The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) reviewed the [2024 Pacific sardine benchmark assessment](#) (I.3, Attachment 1) and [the Supplemental Appendix to the assessment](#) (I.3, Supplemental Attachment 3) for the northern subpopulation of Pacific sardine. The CPSMT also reviewed the [Scientific and Statistical Committee \(SSC\) report](#) (I.3.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1) recommending an overfishing limit (OFL) and corresponding acceptable biological catch (ABC) values for 2024-2025 harvest specifications for Tier 2 in Table 6 of [the Supplemental Appendix to the assessment](#).

The age 1+ biomass estimated from the 2024 assessment is projected to be 58,614 mt on July 1, 2024. The SSC recommended an OFL of 8,312 mt for the 2024-2025 fishing season based on the age 1+ biomass estimate. The stock remains below the CUTOFF value of 150,000 mt of age 1+ biomass and therefore the CPS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) dictates that the primary directed fishery be closed for the 2024-2025 fishing year. This does not prohibit exempted fishing permits (EFPs), incidental catch, minor directed catch, or catch for live bait, recreational, and tribal fisheries.

The CPSMT recommends maintaining a P* value of 0.40 for use in setting harvest specifications. This produces an ABC of 6,005 mt for the 2024-2025 fishing year. The CPSMT recommends setting the annual catch limit (ACL) equal to ABC with an annual catch target (ACT) of 5,500 mt for the 2024-2025 fishing year (Table 1). This accommodates CPS fisheries and incidental harvest in non-CPS fisheries, as well as the proposed 670 mt from EFP requests. The CPSMT also recommends the accountability measures listed below to prevent exceeding the ACL. The CPSMT notes that all sources of catch, including any EFP research set-asides, the live bait fishery, incidental catch in CPS and non-CPS fisheries, and minor directed fishing, will be accounted for against the ACL. These recommended harvest specifications align with the rebuilding plan for Pacific sardine. Table 2 in this report summarizes the levels of sardine catch in CPS and non-CPS fisheries for the most recent fishing seasons and shows that recent catch in the U.S. has remained below the ACL.

The CPS FMP allows the incidental landing limit to range up to 45 percent when the stock is above the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) of 50,000 mt and still below the CUTOFF. The CPSMT conferred with the CPS Advisory Subpanel and agrees that an increase from 20 percent to 30 percent, now that the MSST is above 50,000 mt, would provide more flexibility for other CPS fisheries.

Table 1. 2024-2025 Scientific and Statistical Committee recommended OFL, CPSMT-recommended P* Buffer, ABC, ACL, and ACT.

OFL	8,312 mt
P* Buffer	0.40
ABC _{Tier 2}	6,005 mt
ACL	6,005 mt
ACT	5,500 mt

List of CPSMT-Recommended Accountability Measures

1. Incidental landing limit in CPS fisheries of 30 percent.
2. If landings in the live bait fishery attain 3,000 mt, a per landing limit of one mt of Pacific sardine per trip will apply to the live bait fishery.
3. If the ACT of 5,500 mt is attained, a per trip limit of 1 mt of Pacific sardine applies to all CPS fisheries.
4. An incidental per landing allowance of 2 mt of Pacific sardine in non-CPS fisheries until the ACL is reached.

Table 2. Pacific sardine landings (mt) by fishery and harvest specifications for previous sardine fishing seasons (July 1-June 30).

Fishing Season	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022 - 2023	2023-2024³
CPS Incidental	249	131	186	149	141
Non-CPS Incidental¹	5	1	30	14	1
EFP²	728	976	340	201	267
Live Bait	1,008	1,308	1,192	1,151	867
Tribal	0	0	0	0	0
Minor Directed	70	82	34	77	57
Total	2,060	2,498	1,782	1,592	1,333
ACT	4,000	4,000	3,000	3,800	3,600
ACL	4,514	4,288	3,329	4,274	3,953

¹Non-CPS incidental includes at-sea Pacific whiting total mortality from PacFIN

²Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) take ([PFMC November 2020](#), [PFMC April 2021](#), [PFMC April 2022](#), [PFMC April 2023](#))

³2023-2024 data as of February 29, 2024 and subject to change