

FIXED GEAR MARKING AND ENTANGLEMENT RISK REDUCTION –
FINAL ACTION

In September 2023, 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 fixed gear (i.e., pot and longline gear). The Council selected a preliminary preferred alternative in March 2024 which included gear-specific gear marking, entanglement risk reduction measures, and administrative actions for groundfish fixed gear vessels. For gear marking, the Council recommended that gear-specific markings be considered for both buoys and lines. Entanglement risk reduction measures include voluntarily limiting the amount of surface gear and requiring a limitation on the amount of 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.

Attachment 1 provides an overview of the range of alternatives including the preliminary preferred alternative and issues to be resolved to fully specify the alternatives. Attachment 2 is the analytical document that the Council and its advisory bodies should use in developing their recommendations for a final preferred alternative.

At this meeting, the Council should consider the information provided as well as any advisory body or public comments and adopt final preferred alternatives, if possible.

Council Action:

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

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 1 – Fixed Gear Marking and Entanglement Risk Reduction-Alternatives.
2. Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 2- Fixed Gear Marking and Entanglement Risk Reduction Initial Regulatory Impact Review/Regulatory Flexibility Act/Magnuson Stevens Act Document (***Electronic Only***).
3. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- F.5. Fixed Gear Marking and Entanglement Risk Reduction- Final Action Jessi Doerpinghaus
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt a Final Preferred Alternative

PFMC
05/09/24