

# C.2 Council Operations and Priorities

## Council Action:

Review Executive Director Recommendations and Adopt Changes for Public Review, Provide Guidance on Next Steps

### Guidance on Council Operations

#### Overarching considerations

- When considering options to create efficiencies and reduce costs, ensure that we do not erode the public process or disenfranchise public participation.
- Reductions in the number of meetings, meeting length, and using remote meetings should be spread across all FMPs and FMP-associated advisory bodies

Based on Section 5. “Road map for implementation of recommendations” in [Agenda Item C.2 Attachment 1, June 2024](#), work towards the following benchmarks by the times listed, sooner if possible.

#### For January 2025

- Discontinue staff and contractor travel/work on international Highly Migratory Species matters and Council travel to the International Pacific Halibut Commission annual meeting.

#### For September 2025

- Continue to work towards reducing Council meeting length by at least one-half day, including commensurate reductions in the length of Advisory Body meetings. This may also require a decrease in the number of agenda items covered at each meeting, rather than trying to do the same amount of work in less time.
  - Work toward providing advisory bodies with clearer guidance on which issues outside of their FMP they are expected to provide comment on (e.g. marine planning, ecosystem, etc.)

- Additional information is needed before guidance can be provided on the proposed Cross-FMP advisory group: membership, how and when it would meet, goals of the group, etc.
- Revise the public comment time to 5 minutes for both an individual and a group, while allowing the Chair or Vice Chair to modify that time before public comment begins on an agenda item depending on how many people have signed up for public comment.
- Implement a more standardized advisory body report format, with a summary of recommendations or executive summary at the beginning of the report.
  - Seek guidance from NOAA GC on what is required to “build the record”
  - Reports should not have a page limit. Many reports cover topics that have multiple pieces, are complex, and/or require a lot of analysis to show the impacts and trade-offs of actions. A page limit could greatly impact the quality of information the Council receives to inform decision making.
  - Promote summarization of reports, reading only the recommendations/ executive summary, and key sections, then have the AB member be available for questions.
  - Have AB strive to provide presentations summarizing complex items, rather than reading reports, as time and workload allows.

#### For March 2026

- Continue to explore reducing the size of Council meetings and relocating meetings to more economical locations.
  - Consider having one Council meeting every year, or every other year fully remote or only Council members in person.
    - Look into having that meeting in a coastal fishing community, which could encourage participation from “local” fishery participants and/or new people to the Council process.
- Continue to explore annual scheduling for the various FMP, being strategic in which agenda items would be covered during remote meetings (i.e. not scheduling final action on a contentious issue during a remote meeting). Potential Schedule:
  - Highly Migratory Species: 3 meeting per year, with ABs remote for at least one of those meetings. This would be achieved by dropping

the September meeting in odd years and the June meeting in even years, to remain consistent with the FMP and biennial management cycle.

- Coastal Pelagic Species: 2 council meetings per year, with ABs remote for at least one of those meetings.
- Groundfish: aim for 4 meetings per year, with at least one meeting every 2 years being remote
  - Make a firm commitment to have no groundfish scheduled for April of odd years
  - Consider groundfish ABs remote in March of even years
- Salmon: 3-4 meetings per years. March and April in person for all ABs. The other one or two meetings should be remote, depending on topics scheduled.
- Ecosystem: 2 meetings per year, with ABs remote for 1 of the meetings.
- Habitat Committee: current schedule of 4 meetings per year with at least 1 remote meeting per year.
- Scientific and Statistical Committee: 5 meetings per year with at least one remote meeting per year.
- Schedule Advisory Body meetings in advance of Council meetings when possible given Council schedule and process requirements
- Explore a decisional mechanism framework to determine effective Advisory Body size and composition, keeping in mind the EEJ goals and operational needs.

#### For September 2026

- Reduce workload and agenda planning to twice per year, rather than at every meeting, scheduled for meetings that can help inform the Council's budget process. Between those meetings have Council staff schedule items as necessary.
- Examine how to streamline the Exempted Fishing Permit Process across all FMPs, such as only accepting new EFPs once per year, approving in one meeting, and having only NMFS review and approve/ dis-approve renewals while keeping the council informed of those EFPs.
- Agency reports that are informational in nature, especially those that were available in the advanced briefing book do not need to be read

or summarized on the Council floor. Staff from the appropriate agency would be available for questions.

- Put all informational reports under their respective FMPs and/or agenda items, rather than bunched together at the bottom of the online briefing book page, where they may easily get overlooked.

### September 2025

- Work toward developing a new process for considering new initiatives on a pre-specified schedule, may require changes to the Council Operating Procedures. This new process should align with the budget process.

Guidance provided by Lynn Mattes

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