



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Brad Pettinger, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 30, 2024

TO: Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel, Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer for Highly Migratory Species

SUBJECT: September 2024 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet September 17-23, 2024, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Spokane City Center in Spokane, Washington. Both the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) are scheduled to meet **in person** Friday and Saturday, September 20-21. Additional meeting information can be found on the Council's [September 2024 Meeting webpage](#).

Summaries of HMS topics and other items of interest on the Council agenda are listed below.

J.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will brief the Council on recent regulatory activities. The Southwest Fisheries Science Center will brief the Council on recent HMS research activities.

J.2 International Management Activities

Several international meetings were held between June and September whose outcomes are of interest to the Council. Specifically, recommendations on catch limit increases for Pacific bluefin tuna were adopted through the Joint Working Group process including a proposed to Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Resolution for 2025-2026 biennial limits, to be adopted at its September 2-6 annual meeting. NMFS will be revising regulations to change trip limits in response to catch limit increases. NMFS staff will consult with the HMSAS and MT on the development of revised measures and discuss additional stakeholder consultation opportunities.

J.3 2025-26 Harvest Specifications and Management Measures—Preliminary

The HMS Fishery Management Plan lays out a biennial process that affords Council input on identifying key management reference points for HMS stocks. This meeting kicks off the current biennial process with final action occurring in either November or March. The NMFS Report for this agenda item provides information related to status determination criteria for HMS stocks with

new assessments. NMFS will use this updated information to determine whether a stock is subject to overfishing or overfished. The Council may provide input on identifying these management reference points and must respond to overfishing/overfished status determinations as outlined in the Magnuson-Stevens Act for internationally managed stocks.

The Council could also scope relevant new management measures as part of this process, although none have been identified yet. However, the HMSAS and MT can bring forward management proposals in supplemental reports, if warranted.

C.2 Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) – Gap Analysis Framework and Regional Implementation Plan

Under this agenda item, the Council will review and discuss the final West Coast EEJ Regional Implementation Plan (RP) (Agenda Item C.2, Attachment 1), which was released in August 2024. The plan serves as a roadmap for applying the National EEJ Strategy's goals and actions in the context of West Coast needs (National EEJ Strategy: September 2023 Council Meeting, [Agenda Item H.5, Attachment 3](#)).

The Council will also review a draft Gap Analysis Workplan, which was developed in coordination with the Equity and Environmental Justice Committee (EEJC) and outlines Council processes and products that may benefit from improvements to better address EEJ considerations. The Council will provide feedback on the draft outline and is expected to adopt the workplan. The Gap Analysis will consider the actions included in the NMFS RP and is anticipated to be completed in mid-to-late 2025.

Advisory Bodies will be provided with informational briefings on the above items but are not expected to submit statements. Input from Advisory Bodies will be solicited when the Gap Analysis is available for review and any potential work outcomes or next steps are presented.

C.3 Inflation Reduction Act Projects – Check In

In May/June 2024, the Council was notified that its proposed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) projects had been approved. During this agenda item, the Council will receive an update from Council staff on work plans and timelines for further developing and implementing the three projects, each of which focuses on an aspect of climate resilience and related Council management and decision-making processes. Draft project work plans are included in the briefing materials, highlighting Council-specific milestones and products. The HMSAS and MT are encouraged to review the draft plans and, if desired, provide any feedback or input to Council staff during its meeting; staff will incorporate and share this feedback during their presentation to the Council, unless you see a reason to submit your recommendations directly in the form reports.

Note that the HMS Roadmap Workshop conducted in conjunction with the June Council meeting is a component of proposed IRA project 3: Developing Climate Ready Fishing Methods that Mitigate Bycatch of Non-Target, Associated Species in a Changing Ecosystem. You may wish to comment on further development of the Roadmap in the context of this proposed IRA project.

K.3 Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

The HMSAS may wish to consider its term-limited positions for the upcoming 2025-2027 term. At its June meeting, the Council reviewed the current Advisory Body composition and adopted changes in membership for public review. No changes to HMSAS composition are proposed. In September 2024, the Council will adopt any proposed changes. This will kick off the nominations process with appointments made at the November Council meeting.



Finally, as usual, I have included Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning (Agenda Item K.4) in case you wish to comment on the scheduling of HMS items on future agendas.

In addition to the enclosed briefing materials, you may obtain electronic copies of all the meeting materials on our website. We also post supplemental briefing materials on our website as they become available after distribution of the advance briefing book. Public comment is available only in electronic form through the Council's [e-portal](#). Visit the [September 2024 Meeting webpage](#) to access these materials.

As always, thank you for your service to the Council process.

KRD:ael

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A: Council Meeting Agenda and Executive Director's Report
2. Agenda Items C: Cross Fishery Management Plan
3. Agenda Items J: Highly Migratory Species Management
4. Agenda Items K: Administrative Matters
5. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
6. Informational Reports
7. General Information and Council Roster

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