

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON PHASE 2 STOCK DEFINITIONS- SCOPING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) finds the purpose and need, scope, and process as described in [Agenda Item I.8, Attachment 1](#) to be sufficient. The GAP agrees that the [schedule](#) appears extraordinarily ambitious given the enormity and intricacy of the task. However, we stress that this process should be done in an expeditious manner so that staff capacity and Council time can be spent on measures that are priorities for industry that will result in benefits to the fishery and seafood industry.

To facilitate the analysis, we request:

1. **A table of species-specific contributions as a percentage to the complex for each species within each currently defined complex**, as is required under National Standard 1 (“(i) At the time a stock complex is established, the FMP should provide, to the extent practicable, a full and explicit description of the proportional composition of each stock in the stock complex.”). An updated report such as the [Agenda Item E.3.a, GMT Report 2 from November 2021](#) would be helpful to inform decisions in advance of step one. Additionally, this would support identifying those species which cannot be expected to be substantial contributors to the fisheries productivity of the complex and fishery. We expect that the table will be on the basis of either the optimal yield or maximum sustainable yield productivity of the complex.
2. **A combined commercial and recreational average annual catch of each currently managed groundfish species in common units**, e.g. metric tons, so we can see a quantitative measure of their relative contribution to the catch. The GAP understands there are many ways “value” may be assessed, other than by the weight of, or ex-vessel economic value of the catch alone.

Within the guidance section there are ten suggested criteria to consider when determining whether a stock is in need of “conservation and management.” However, the GAP believes that an additional factor should be added to the list that considers the importance of access to the stock to West Coast communities. An example of this could be a stock that has a relatively low economic value, but could be a source of affordable protein.

The GAP will continue to be engaged on this topic. We agree with the guidance that factors beyond the fraction of a stock or catch occurring within state waters should go into the decision to remove a species from the FMP, and the fishing communities affected by these decisions should have input into those factors and decision points.