

STOCK ASSESSMENT PRIORITIZATION

The stock assessment prioritization (SAP) process was designed to guide stock assessment priorities, survey design, and the long-term integrity and value of abundance indices while providing sufficient flexibility to allow for revisions in the intervening year based on new information. The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) underwent SAP for the first time in November 2022 for prioritizing assessments for 2024 and 2025.

Table 1 below shows the most recent assessment (type and date), upcoming assessment scheduled for 2025, and proposed assessment (type and date) for 2026-2027 based on the schedule outlined in Council Operating Procedure 9 (COP 9) for Pacific mackerel and based on historical practices for the northern subpopulation for Pacific sardine. While COP 9 specifies annual assessments for Pacific sardine, it does not specify assessment type. The Council has historically operated on a schedule of a benchmark assessment followed by two update assessments. No assessment is proposed for the central population of northern anchovy at this time, but an evaluation of the flowchart will be conducted in April 2026 and at that time, a new assessment could be recommended if conditions are met.

Table 1. Coastal Pelagic Species by Last, Upcoming, and Proposed Assessment Type and Date.

Species	Last Assessment	Upcoming Assessment	Proposed Assessment
Pacific sardine	Feb. 2024- Benchmark	Feb. 2025- Update	Feb. 2026- Update
Pacific mackerel	May 2023- Benchmark	Jun 2025- Catch Only Update	May 2027- Benchmark

Council staff along with National Marine Fisheries Service West Coast Region and Southwest Fisheries Science Center Staff have discussed the above timelines, and based on capacity, offer some considerations for the Council in Attachment 1.

The Council could also choose to set priorities for more than just two years ahead, therefore providing as much advance notice as possible, but ultimately retains the opportunity to re-evaluate and adjust them as necessary when this item is scheduled to come before the Council in 2026.

Council Action:

Adopt Stock Assessment Priorities for 2026-27 and Provide Other Guidance, as Appropriate

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item J.3, Attachment 1: Joint Council/NMFS Staff Report on Stock Assessment Prioritization.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- J.3 Stock Assessment Prioritization Jessi Waller/Katrina Bernaus
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Stock Assessment Priorities for 2026-27 and Provide Other Guidance, as Appropriate

PFMC
10/21/24