

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) reviewed the Pacific Council Workload Planning: Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance (YAG) Summary ([Agenda Item C.6 Attachment 1](#)) and the Draft Proposed Council Meeting Agenda, April 2025 ([Agenda Item C.6 Attachment 3](#)). The CPSMT offers the following for Council consideration.

Future Meetings

March 2025 Meeting: The CPSMT plans to hold a webinar to prepare for the March meeting for non-CPS items.

April 2025 Meeting: In November 2023, the agenda item “Science Needs and Stock Structure” was added to the Council’s YAG agenda. Since then, the agenda item has continued to be pushed to future meeting dates due to staff capacity and has evolved into the “CPS Science Needs and Priorities - Scoping” item currently scheduled, yet shaded, for April 2025. For the April 2025 meeting, the CPSMT recommends unshading the “CPS Science Needs and Priorities - Scoping” agenda item and updating the agenda item name to “Pacific Sardine Science and Management Priorities.”

The CPSMT recognizes several long-standing science and management needs, but is limiting this recommendation to the highest priority need in order to help with scoping for the April meeting. The CPSMT recommends that CPS Science and Management Priorities be revisited on a biennial basis at the November Council meeting to evaluate progress and revisit prioritization.

Highest Priority: Science and Management of Pacific Sardine

The northern subpopulation of Pacific sardine (NSP) is currently managed as a stock under the CPS FMP. While the directed fishery is closed, the majority of current Pacific sardine landings occur in the live bait fishery in Southern California. The 2024 benchmark stock assessment attributed a high percentage of the live-bait catch to the southern subpopulation of Pacific sardine (SSP), which is not managed by the Council. Because there is no current method used for differentiating the catch by stock upon landing, all catch is counted towards the annual catch limit (ACL) for the NSP. There is an inability of the Southern California fleet to have their catch assigned to the SSP in-season and to fully exploit this stock, as it is not part of the CPS FMP. The absence of in-season catch accounting to the appropriate subpopulation has been an ongoing issue for several years and negatively affects the NSP fisheries. The CPSMT supports the ongoing research on Pacific sardine stock structure.

Continued evaluation of E_{msy} and distribution terms are additional long-standing science and management priorities for Pacific sardine, as they are key components of the way the harvest control rules are applied to Pacific sardine fisheries.