

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON RESEARCH AND DATA NEEDS

The HMSAS appreciates the efforts of the Council staff to develop a new framework for considering research and data needs and the proposal to identify management and science challenges across various themes. In general, the HMSAS notes that many HMS species are managed through international agreements and are not subject to the same science and data requirements as other FMPs that are managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). As such, there may be cases where the HMS research and data needs fit within the overall theme but have different implications for management. The HMSAS looks forward to future steps in this process to help spell out some of those nuances.

For this initial discussion, the HMSAS supports the inclusion of key HMS science challenges as outlined within this framework, including within the categories of data limited stocks, fishery impact projections and socio-economic resilience. The HMSAS provides only one suggested edit under the data-limited theme as follows (see addition of underlined text):

“Need improved abundance indices including fishery independent methods such as close-kin-mark-recapture (CKMR), and in many cases improvements to fishery dependent methods”.

The rationale for this suggested addition is that international science advisors (i.e. IATTC science staff, ISC, etc.) are noting increasing concerns with fishery dependent data for HMS fisheries due to changing fleet dynamics and developing alternative approaches are an emerging challenge.

PFMC
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