

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON HMS ROADMAP WORKSHOP REPORT AND NEXT STEPS

Recommendations:

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) recommends that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council):

- 1. Adopt the HMS Roadmap Workshop Report submitted as H.4 Attachment 1.**
- 2. Create a working group made up of HMSAS and HMSMT, fishermen, stakeholders and NMFS to provide guidance for completion of the HMS Roadmap Document.**
- 3. Encourage revising COP 20 as soon as possible to include ideas and input obtained from stakeholders during the HMS workshop to streamline the HMS EFP process.**
- 4. Recognize the direct connection between the Objectives of IRA Project 3 and the ideas and recommendations that resulted from the HMS workshop.**

Review and Adopt the HMS Roadmap Workshop Report

The HMSAS supports the Council's review and adoption of the *HMS Roadmap Workshop Report*. The collaborative efforts of the HMSAS, HMSMT, and stakeholders have provided a comprehensive framework for addressing key challenges in HMS fisheries, including the specific priorities of increasing access to and effectively utilizing abundant HMS stocks. The report reflects a balanced approach to ensuring sustainability while supporting the economic health and growth of our fishing communities and families. Adoption of the report is a step toward increasing the viability of HMS fisheries and preserving the livelihoods of those who depend on it.

Provide Guidance for Completion of the HMS Roadmap

The HMSAS encourages the Council to provide guidance that incorporates previously outlined goals and action items when finalizing the HMS Roadmap document. The document should prioritize strategies that support the vision outlined in the [*National Seafood Strategy*](#), particularly in maintaining or increasing sustainable U.S. wild capture production. Further, we emphasize the importance of aligning the HMS Roadmap with other priorities of the NOAA Fisheries' *National Seafood Strategy*, which envisions:

- Sustainable U.S. seafood production that continues to support jobs and local economies,
- The U.S. seafood sector contributing to climate-ready food production and domestic nutritional needs,
- Increased U.S. seafood production, benefiting fishing communities by preserving and creating jobs and strengthening the economy,
- Modernized supply chains with more value-added activities within the U.S.,
- Expanded opportunities for a diverse and growing workforce.

By supporting sustainable fisheries, this HMS Roadmap will play a key role in ensuring that fishing communities and families can continue to survive, benefiting both the economy and the future of our coastal communities.

Create a Working Group to Further the Final Roadmap

The HMSAS recommends that the Council create a working group to identify and prioritize steps necessary for the implementation of the final HMS Roadmap. The working group could be made up of selected members from the HMSMT, HMSAS, NMFS, stakeholders and others that may be appropriate. HMSAS and HMSMT are prepared to provide input on appropriate candidates for the proposed working group.

Develop a Framework for more Efficient Exempted Fishing Permit Application Review Including Revisions of Council Operating Procedure 20

The HMSAS recommends that the proposed working group develop a clear and efficient process for EFP review. Revisions to COP 20 will facilitate the testing of new economically viable, innovative fishing methods that achieve acceptable levels of bycatch and contribute to long-term fishery sustainability. Prioritizing EFPs that align with the HMS Road Map will strengthen the economic viability of the fishery while maintaining goals of bycatch reduction.

Recognize the Relationship Between the HMS Roadmap and IRA Project 3 Objectives

The HMSAS urges the Council to consider the synergy between the *HMS Roadmap* and the goals of *Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Project 3: Developing Climate-Ready Fishing Methods*. These efforts, which focus on achieving acceptable levels of bycatch and climate adaptation, are crucial to ensuring the resilience of the fishery in the face of environmental change. Aligning these initiatives will support not only ecosystem health but also the economic stability of fishing communities that depend on sustainable, productive fisheries for their livelihoods.

The HMSAS reiterates that the HMS Workshop was a success and encourages further meaningful collaboration with fishery participants to guide the future of the HMS Roadmap.

Perspectives on Supplemental California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Report

The HMSAS appreciates the availability of the Supplemental CDFW Report on HMS Roadmap Workshop Report and Next Steps before our meetings began. While we are in general agreement with many of the points raised in the CDFW Supplemental Report, we offer the following specific comments:

We interpret the intent of Action Item 2c¹, proposed for removal by CDFW, as allowing for a considered analysis of economic and social tradeoffs associated with bycatch levels. To the extent this allows for more informed decision making, we recommend this Action Item be retained.

We interpret the intent of Action Item 4b², proposed for removal by CDFW, as incorporating trade leakage and the transfer effect. To the extent US seafood production is outsourced to nations with more lax conservation regulations, there may be negative conservation impacts relative to increasing domestic production.

¹ Evaluate bycatch levels relative to a multispecies index of harvest in the context of population levels, economic impacts, fleets, and fishing effort levels including comparisons with importing HMS caught by foreign fleets. (Goals A, B & C)

² Identify ways to mitigate negative impacts on conservation by reducing the trade deficit. (Goals B, C & E)

While the Council cannot directly influence carbon emissions, evaluating climate impacts of alternative fishing practices (Action Item 7b), it is possible to measure emissions of different fisheries by using tools like the ‘Seafood Carbon Emissions Tool’.

We recommend rewording Action Item 8c as follows: Understand and consider impacts of potential competing current and future marine uses (i.e. offshore wind, aquaculture, etc.) to HMS Fisheries and in HMS fisheries management. (Goals D & E). This restores the original language and incorporates the recommendations from CDFW.

PFMC
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