



Pacific Fishery Management Council

7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101 Portland, OR 97220-1384
Phone 503-820-2280 | Toll free 866-806-7204 | Fax 503-820-2299 | www.pcouncil.org
Brad Pettinger, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 28, 2025
TO: Scientific and Statistical Committee
FROM: Marlene A. Bellman, Staff Officer
SUBJECT: April 2025 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council, PFMC) April 2025 meeting will be held in person from April 9 through April 15, 2025, in San Jose, CA. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet **online only** on Wednesday, April 9 and Thursday, April 10, starting at 8 a.m. each day. Your meeting materials are enclosed.

Instructions for how to connect to the Council and Advisory Body meetings will be posted on the Council's [April 2025 Meeting webpage](#) prior to the first day of the meeting. Upon entering the meeting remotely, please modify your entry to reflect your full identification (full name and affiliation). This additional information helps participants identify speakers during public comment. All meetings are open to the public and at least one opportunity for public comment has been scheduled for each meeting day.

This meeting is being conducted online and provides the opportunity for remote public comment. In the event an outage occurs, or technical issues arise that impact the experience of remote attendees, we will attempt to resolve them but, ultimately, we cannot guarantee that they will be resolved satisfactorily.

SSC Administrative Matters

On Wednesday, April 9, the SSC meeting will be called to order by the SSC Chair and any designated alternates will be introduced. Next, the SSC will receive a briefing from the Council's Executive Director, Merrick Burden, to provide clarification on Council direction and informational updates. The SSC will finalize their April 2025 meeting agenda and the March 2025 meeting minutes. Subcommittee assignments will be reviewed and updated, as necessary. SSC recusals will be noted, plans for presenting SSC statements to the Council will be discussed, and an open SSC discussion period will follow.

A public comment period will be conducted at the beginning of each day to allow for public comments to be considered prior to the SSC taking up an agenda item.

H. Administrative Matters

H.1 Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

Under Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COPs), the SSC reviews any vacant management or technical team seats which are submitted before the Council meeting in an SSC closed session. A nomination for Katie Davis to fill one of the National Marine Fisheries Service seats on the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) has been submitted for review. Any SSC recommendations regarding membership appointments will be offered during the Council Closed Executive Session on Friday, April 11.

H.3 Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

The SSC will discuss future workload planning matters and report to the Council on this matter under Agenda Item H.3 scheduled for Tuesday, April 15.

Future workload planning may include discussion with SSC subcommittees to plan for Council tasks noted in future Council meeting quick reference agendas or Year-at-a-Glance topics. The SSC statement regularly provides a table with important meeting dates and timelines. The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee should update any plans with the full SSC for the upcoming 2025 stock assessment cycle.

D. Salmon Management

D.4 Methodology Review Preliminary Topic Selection

Under Agenda Item D.4, the SSC plans to discuss preliminary salmon topics with the Salmon Technical Team (STT) and provide recommendations for methodologies to be reviewed in 2025. The STT will be available for discussion or questions (April 10).

Each year, the SSC completes a methodology review to help ensure new or significantly modified methodologies employed to estimate impacts of the Council's salmon management use the best available science. The process normally involves: 1) developing a list of potential topics for review at the April Council meeting, 2) development of analytical materials to be reviewed between April and September Council meetings, 3) final selection of review topics at the September Council meeting, 4) a review of selected topics in October by the SSC Salmon Subcommittee and the Salmon Technical Team, and 5) review by the full SSC at the November Council meeting.

The SSC will provide any recommendations to the Council under Agenda Item D.4 on Saturday, April 12.

G. Coastal Pelagic Species Management

G.3 Sardine Update Assessment Specifications and Management Measures for 2025-2026 – Final

At this meeting, the Council plans to adopt harvest specifications and management measures for the 2025-26 Pacific sardine fishing season. The SSC will review an update assessment for Pacific

sardine (Attachment 1) and will provide their recommendations to the Council on the use of the assessment, making a determination of best available science for use in management decision-making for the 2025-2026 fishery. The SSC will recommend an overfishing limit to the Council based on the update assessment and estimated biomass, the sigma (i.e., uncertainty), and consider the evaluation of the relationship between CalCOFI SST and sardine population dynamics provided in Attachment 2.

The SSC should also recommend a process to set harvest specifications for the 2026-2027 fishery in April 2026, given the Council prioritized a review of the Integrated West Coast Pelagics Survey for 2026 ([Agenda Item J.3, November 2024](#)).

For Agenda Item G.3, the SSC will provide recommendations to the Council on Sunday, April 13.

G.4 Pacific Mackerel Specifications and Management Measures for 2025-2027 – Final

At this meeting, the Council plans to adopt harvest specifications and management measures for the 2025-2027 biennium. The SSC will review a catch-only update for Pacific mackerel and will provide their recommendations to the Council on the use of the update for management decision-making under Agenda Item G.4. The SSC will also recommend an overfishing limit to the Council based on the catch-only update and estimated biomass, the sigma (i.e., uncertainty), and determination of best available science to use in decision-making for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 fishing seasons.

For Agenda Item G.4, the SSC will provide recommendations to the Council on Sunday, April 13.

G.5 Science and Management Priorities

Over the past several years the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS), the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT), SSC, the Council, and Council Staff have discussed a range of science and management topics for the CPS fishery.

Council staff developed a white paper (Attachment 1) summarizing science and management topics for the CPS fishery. This paper describes a list that the Council should consider revising as appropriate, adopting, and utilizing to establish key fishery topics and identify priorities.

The SSC will review the list of management topics described in Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 1, making recommendations on any revisions, as necessary. From this list, the SSC should provide recommendations on the prioritization of CPS science and management topics. The SSC should discuss the potential workload involved for each priority topic, identifying any relevant science needs and areas that may require SSC review.

The SSC will provide recommendations to the Council for Agenda Item G.5 on Monday, April 14.

C. Cross Fishery Management Plan

C.2 Research and Data Needs

In November 2024, the Council began a review process for updating and communicating research and data needs to support the management of U.S. west coast fisheries (Agenda Item D.3). Per the framework for this review cycle, the Council adopted science and management challenges to guide the next steps (descriptions provided in [Agenda Item D.3, Supplemental SSC Report 1, November 2024](#)). These high-level challenges were an initial step to communicate prioritization of areas where research is needed to advance Council objectives.

The SSC then conducted an exercise to identify and compile preliminary research and data need recommendations which could be pursued for potential solutions under each of these challenges (Agenda Item C.2, Scientific and Statistical Committee Report 1).

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to adopt a list of preliminary research and data needs. The SSC should provide any further comments or context related to their preliminary recommendations in the advanced briefing book material, under Agenda Item C.2 scheduled for Saturday, April 12.

At the June 2025 meeting, the SSC will provide their final recommendations to the Council, the preliminary list could be refined, if needed, and a final research and data needs list is scheduled to be adopted by the Council.

Informational Council Agenda Items

The SSC may find several other Council Agenda Items of interest, or which may contain informational materials relevant to the SSC including:

G.1 – National Marine Fisheries Service Report

Mr. Josh Lindsay of the National Marine Fisheries Service West Coast Region will provide a regulatory update and Dr. Annie Yau of the Southwest Fisheries Science Center will provide an update on research and Science Center activities to the CPS advisory bodies and the Council. The SSC may be interested in attending Dr. Yau's presentation or reviewing the associated slides (Supplemental Presentation 1) to stay informed on recent research and data developments for the CPS fishery.

D.5 – Essential Fish Habitat Scoping and Workplan

This item includes a Call for Information and Data, as well as a workplan timeline, during which an SSC review would be requested.

C.5 – Council Operations and Priorities

This item includes informational materials for Council advisory bodies and may include proposals on council efficiencies that would be of interest to the SSC.

Thank you all for your dedication to West Coast fishery management and the Council process.

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Council Enclosures include:

Agenda Item A – Council Meeting Agenda
Agenda Item H – Administrative Matters
Agenda Item D – Salmon Management
Agenda Item G – Coastal Pelagic Species Management
Agenda Item C – Cross Fishery Management Plan

SSC Agenda, Draft SSC Minutes, Closed Session, Etc.

1. April 2025 SSC Agenda
2. Draft March 2025 SSC Minutes
3. SSC Supplemental Materials
4. Closed Session
5. Informational Reports
6. General Information and Council Roster

PFMC
03/24/25