

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND PRIORITIES

Referencing the [Agenda Item C.5, Attachment 1](#), the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP):

- Supports reducing the 21-day production time for advanced briefing book documents to the 14-day timeframe. This should allow staff and agencies more time to better prepare reports and documents without significantly affecting opportunities to read and study the information prior to a Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting;
- Supports shortening meetings and/or taking advantage of webinars in advance of Council meetings so long as sufficient time is allowed for thorough GAP discussion and consideration. This is especially important regarding particularly complex or comprehensive issues, such as biennial harvest specifications, program-wide changes such as those for trawl or limited entry fixed gear fisheries, etc.;
- Remains concerned about a too-narrow focus on “core” advisory body issues but supports consideration of changes to make advisory body meetings more efficient. Some non-core items and/or cross-Fishery Management Plan items could have an outsized effect (positive or negative) on groundfish fisheries. For example, GAP members are very interested in research and data needs that could affect both groundfish and other fisheries. Offshore energy concerns is another example.

Some of these items could be covered in pre-Council webinar meetings, similar to the GAP and Groundfish Management Team (GMT) online meetings held in advance of the April 2025 meeting since groundfish was not on the agenda. The GAP supports exploring these kinds of opportunities for flexibility; and

- The GAP also agrees with the idea of including informational reports for items that do not require Council floor time. Additionally, the GAP suggests providing informational reports on non-agenda items GAP members feel Council members could find of interest and for inclusion in the Council record. One example of this includes GAP responses to trawl cost recovery reports. On our pre-March webinar, we received a presentation about the updated cost recovery situation, but the Council was not scheduled to consider it or take action. The GAP included comments about cost recovery under the Groundfish National Marine Fisheries Service Report agenda item, but could just as easily have turned this into an informational report for Council members to consider and to maintain the integrity of the Council record regarding the GAP’s discussion.