



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Brad Pettinger, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 23, 2025

TO: Highly Migratory Species Management Team and Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel and Interested Persons

FROM: Kerry Griffin, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: June 2025 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person June 13 - 16, 2025, in Rohnert Park, California. The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) and the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) will meet in person on June 12 - 13. The Council is scheduled to take up HMS matters on June 14. Major topics for discussion at this meeting are below. For more detailed information, please refer to the situation summaries in the Briefing Book materials.

#### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Report (F.1)**

NMFS will provide a regulatory update on HMS management. This is primarily an informational agenda item with an opportunity for Council questions and discussion.

#### **International Management Activities (F.2)**

Several upcoming international meetings will be held in the latter half of 2025 with outcomes that may have effects on the management of West Coast highly migratory species (HMS) fisheries. The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Convention (IATTC) Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) will meet June 2-6 in La Jolla, California, to consider preliminary results of the Pacific bluefin tuna management strategy evaluation (MSE). The preliminary results of the MSE should be available in supplemental Briefing Book materials.

The HMSMT and HMSAS should consider recommendations and priorities the Council could make for U.S. positions at regional fishery management organization meetings over the summer and fall.

#### **Exempted Fishing Permits (F.3)**

The Council received two exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications to test night-set buoy gear and one renewal request. These are in the June Briefing Book as F.3, Attachments 1, 2, and 3. The Council Operating Procedure (COP) 20 describes a two-meeting process for Council approval of

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EFP applications, with preliminary consideration in June and final approval in September. However, it has been practice for the Council to consider final approval at the June meeting, when applications are complete and do not require further review. The HMSAS and HMSMT should review the applications and provide input on any Council recommendation to NMFS on issuing the requested permits. The HMSMT and HMSAS should also consider recommending modifications to COP 20 that would incorporate the flexibility to approve EFPs in one meeting, when warranted.

#### **HMS Roadmap Development (F.4)**

The Council's Ad Hoc Fisheries Innovation Workgroup (FIW) met virtually on April 23, 2025, to discuss relevant HMS Roadmap issues, including edits to the Roadmap and potential improvements to the EFP process. The FIW Report (F.4.a, FIW Report 1) describes the issues and provides recommendations for moving forward. The FIW will also meet on May 28 and may provide a supplemental report for the June Council meeting. The HMSMT and HMSAS should review the FIW report(s) and provide feedback and recommendations for Council consideration. The HMSMT and HMSAS should focus their review and discussion on 1) edits and next steps for the Roadmap and draft FIW Terms of Reference, 2) guidance regarding acceptable levels of EFP bycatch, 3) guidance regarding EFP Performance Goals and Evaluation Metrics, 4) potential modifications to EFP process and timing.

#### **Presidential Executive Orders and Administration Updates (D.1) and Council Response to Executive Orders and Administration Updates (D.2)**

Under Agenda Item D.1, the Council will receive a presentation from NMFS on administrative updates, with a focus on Executive Order (EO) 14276: *Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness*. This is the opportunity for the Council and Advisory Bodies to gain clarity on the task for the Regional Fishery Management Councils necessary to generate the Council's response. Under Agenda Item D.2, the Council is expected to identify actions that align with the objectives of EO 14276—including stabilizing seafood markets, improving access, enhancing economic profitability, and preventing fishery closures. The Council will also provide guidance on key factors to consider when setting priorities. Input from Advisory Bodies on potential actions and prioritization criteria is encouraged under Agenda Item D.2.

#### **Research and Data Needs (D.3)**

The Council is scheduled to adopt a final list of the Council's research and data (R&D) needs to support the management of U.S. West Coast fisheries. Per the framework for this review cycle, in November 2024 the Council adopted science and management challenges to guide the next steps. These high-level challenges were an initial step to communicate prioritization of areas where research is needed to advance Council objectives. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) continued to develop and refine the R&D document and conducted additional outreach with Council advisory bodies where possible.

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to adopt a final list of research and data needs. The Council will consider the SSC recommendations, reports from advisory bodies regarding their

perspectives, and any public comment. The HMSAS and HMSMT have both provided input and should review the draft R&D needs document.

**Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning (C.6)**

In addition to routine consideration of future meeting agendas, the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team and Advisory Subpanel should recommend scheduling of a Science and Management Priorities agenda item, based on the topics and priorities discussed under Agenda Item G.5, April 2025, and provide guidance to the Council.

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Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Open Comment
3. Agenda Item F – Highly Migratory Species
4. Agenda Item D – Cross Fishery Management Plan
5. Agenda Item H – Administrative Matters
6. HMSMT Agenda
7. HMSAS Agenda
8. Informational Reports
9. General Information and Council Roster

PFMC

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