

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON ADOPT STOCK ASSESSMENTS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) recommends the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) adopt all stock assessments in Table 1 of the Situation Summary ([Agenda Item G.3, Situation Summary, September 2025](#)) with the exception of widow and yellowtail rockfish.

For widow rockfish, the GAP supports the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) recommendation and recommends the Council delay adoption of the update assessment and send widow rockfish for supplemental review ("mop-up") at the SSC's [October 14-17 meeting](#).

Although the SSC endorsed the yellowtail rockfish north of 40° 10' N. Lat. as best scientific information available and suitable for informing management decisions, the GAP has concerns. We discussed public comments provided to the SSC's Groundfish Subcommittee at its August 12-13 meeting (see [PAM site](#)), and share concerns that the bottom trawl survey is not adequately measuring the population and the midwater trawl fleet is seeing a productive and growing population while the assessment's results include declines in unfished recruitment (-28 percent) and maximum sustainable yield (-17 percent) compared to the previous assessment.

The GAP recommends that yellowtail rockfish also be sent to supplemental review to more thoroughly consider the expert knowledge provided by fishermen at the Stock Assessment Review (STAR) panel and at other meetings, including why the fishery-dependent data is not accurately capturing the actual conditions since many highly populated areas remain unfished. We are hopeful for the development of the fishery-dependent methodology (see recommendation under [Agenda Item G.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1](#)), but this won't be readily available until the next round of assessments which is too late and our fisheries and communities are the ones that are affected. We understand that there could be limited time available to cover additional stocks at the supplemental review and if so, we would prioritize widow rockfish.

The GAP continues to recommend that expert knowledge from fishermen be considered and meaningfully incorporated into stock assessments (see "Science-Related Elements" section in [Agenda Item E.7.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, June 2025](#)). The GAP appreciates the leadership of fishermen and industry who dedicate their (unpaid) time to participate in pre-assessment workshops, STAR panels, SSC Groundfish Subcommittee meetings, and SSC meetings. However, we are concerned that if their valuable contributions are not meaningfully considered and incorporated, participation may decline, which would be a huge loss for the Council process and the management of groundfish stocks.