

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON SPECIAL PROJECT 1: ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND FLEXIBILITY

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed and discussed Attachments 1-5 as provided by Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) staff. Herein, the GMT discusses the action items from each Attachment that the GMT considers to be of highest priority for groundfish management, and the action items that the GMT thinks should be deprioritized. Omission of other action items does not imply a lack of GMT support. While the GMT sees value in many of the action items from Attachments 1-5, we considered it important to focus our discussion and report on the most relevant action items to balance other workloads during this meeting.

If-then and in-season management action items ([Agenda Item H.1, Attachment 2, April 2026](#)):

The GMT appreciates the consideration of if-then statements to improve Council efficiencies. Of the action items within Attachment 2, the GMT considers Action Item #3 to be a practicable first step, as that would implicitly involve a review of the use of if-then statements, and thus concentrate activities for Action Items #2 and #3 into one action item. **The GMT recommends Action Item #3 of Attachment 2 be included in the PPA.**

The GMT has some concerns with the rigidity that a formal if-then process could impose, especially given that predetermined decisions may not be applicable to each unique situation, and therefore, potential process efficiencies could be lost if decisions need to be revised on a case-by-case basis. Pre-determined decisions and timeframes may also impact public engagement in the Council process. Furthermore, it is critical that Tribal co-managers are fully integrated into the development and implementation of formal if-then processes; particularly given the varying needs and involvement of the Tribes in differing FMPs. While representation on Council advisory bodies provides an important avenue for input, it should not be considered sufficient on its own to ensure meaningful Tribal engagement on actions that may impact co-managed fisheries. Tribal Nations are sovereign governments with distinct fisheries, priorities, and management perspectives, and their views are not interchangeable. As a result, reliance on a single Tribal representative or advisory body input may not fully capture the range of Tribal interests affected by proposed procedural changes. In summary, the framework for establishing if-then statements should be inclusive of those that contribute to the regular Council process.

EFP process improvement action items ([Agenda Item H.1, Attachment 3, April 2026](#)):

The GMT appreciates the prioritizing of these action items based on the value of the action item and the workload that the action item will require. As such, the GMT sees value generally prioritizing Tier 1 Actions (as stated in Attachment 3) over Tier 2 Actions. Of the Tier 1 Actions, the GMT sees value in prioritizing Action Items #4 and #5. The GMT currently reviews and advises the Council on Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) applications, and we continue to see this to be an important role given our experience and knowledge. Of the Tier 2 Actions, the GMT sees value in prioritizing Action Item #11, as it could provide a way to incorporate exemptions from a mature

EFP into regular management activities. The GMT has some concern about Action Item #7a and thinks a single Council Operating Procedure across Fishery Management Plans has the potential to be overly cumbersome and inefficient. **The GMT recommends that Action Items #4, #5 and #11 of Attachment 3 be included in PPA, while Action Item #7a be deprioritized.**

Council action meeting requirements ([Agenda Item H.1, Supplemental Attachment 5, April 2026](#))

The GMT thinks it is worth considering whether some agenda items could be completed in fewer meetings. However, there are tradeoffs to expediting the completion of items while ensuring sufficient representation and contributions by Tribes, co-managers, and other groups (as we state above in discussion for Attachment 2). Therefore, the GMT recommends that very clear boundaries and expectations be spelled out to ensure the appropriate topics are expedited and do not preclude co-managers and public engagement.

PFMC

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