

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON PROTOCOL FOR REVIEWING
ECOSYSTEM COMPONENT SPECIES CATCH AND IDENTIFYING STOCKS IN NEED
OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) recommends creating a process for reviewing ecosystem component (EC) species management that is efficient and does not take away from addressing core management issues. Specifically, the GAP recommends creating an EC species PacFIN report that is available for ongoing review as the initial step, as opposed to having a standalone agenda item as laid out in [Attachment 1](#). The GAP recommends the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) periodically review the report information and provide a concise summary as part of an existing Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) agenda item as the first step. If the GMT identifies a stock to consider, then a more formalized process should occur (i.e., schedule a future agenda item).

Regarding the proposed process, the GAP recommends the following:

- This process should not create a separate recurring Council agenda item for the initial checkpoint step to flag species of interest or create unnecessary workload for the GMT, GAP, Scientific and Statistical Committee, or Council;
- In its reporting, the GMT flag only the species that show meaningful or unexpected changes (in mortality, retention, landings, or other fishery dynamics) warranting further consideration. It is expected that in most years, the report could simply indicate that no EC species require additional action;
- The review frequency remain flexible, allowing a formal review to be scheduled in a given biennium as needed, rather than requiring a comprehensive review every two years. The GAP questions whether a biennial review is necessary for species whose trends are unlikely to change substantially over that timeframe; and
- Detailed analysis, including a “10-Factor” review, be conducted only when a species is flagged, as outlined in the proposed process.

The GAP recommends the EC reporting process be automated as much as possible to eliminate significant GMT and staff time. A lighter EC review process would better preserve GMT and Council capacity to address core fishery management issues. The GAP is ready to provide additional input on any flagged species in the future.