

STOCK ASSESSMENT PROCESS REVIEW ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2027

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council, PFMC) relies on stock assessments to manage fisheries sustainably and partners with the Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Center partners (Science Centers) at the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to create a stock assessment process that is open and transparent. This is a complex process involving iterations between reviewers and scientists, stakeholder engagement, public comment, and has often involved deliberations by the Council (see Attachment 1 for a brief visual description of major points in the current stock assessment process).

At the June 2026 meeting, the Council considered 64 actions identified in a report on ways to improve the stock assessment process ([Agenda Item E.3, Attachment 1, June 2026](#)) and recommendations of a selection of those actions and additional actions from advisory bodies. The Council identified short-term and long-term priority actions that Council staff, in collaboration with partners at NOAA and on the Advisory Bodies, where appropriate, could work to improve the stock assessment process ([see June 2026 Decision Summary Document](#)). The short-term actions which are the focus of this agenda item (long-term items are anticipated in March 2027) were:

- Proceed with all “Clarity In Process Navigation” items in 1a in [Agenda Item E.3, Attachment 2](#)
- Pre-assessment engagement
 - Expand pre-assessment workshops to include update assessments
 - Expand pre-assessments workshop focus to emphasize stakeholder information, including review of fishery prosecution, and stakeholder input on fishery-dependent data used in assessments.
- Develop a plan for sharing assessment results with stakeholders once the assessment is finished but before the Stock Assessment Review (STAR) panel.
- Add an additional Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) or GAP-recommended representative to the STAR panel process (amendment to the Terms of Reference).
- Task Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) with elaborating on improved communication with Council regarding BSIA determinations
- Explore the development of communication tools that support the non-fishery community

Council staff have worked with partners at NOAA and on the Advisory Bodies to address each of these short-term actions. The Council should clarify what is meant by “non-fishery community,” discuss how tools for that community would differ from those developed to communicate with the general public, and identify any additional tools that should be explored for the “non-fishery community.”

The Council should consider the recommendations from Advisory Bodies, the public, and staff before adopting the final structure and format for the 2027 stock assessment reviews and provide any further clarification on short-term items. Regarding possible longer-term changes, a status

update on the long-term items is tentatively scheduled in March 2027 when the Council is anticipated to finalize its ten-year stock assessment plan.

Council Tasks:

1. Review and discuss short term actions and whether the actions have been addressed
2. Clarify the definition of “non-fishing community.”
3. Discuss whether different tools are needed to communicate with “non-fishing communities” compared to the tools used to communicate with the general public.
4. Identify any additional tools that should be explored for the “non-fishing community.”

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.4, Attachment 1: Staff Presentation Stock Assessment Process Overview.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

G.4 Stock Assessment Process Review Adjustments for 2027

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- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
- b. Public Comment
- c. **Council Discussion and Direction on Next Steps**

PFMC
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