HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON HMS ROADMAP: EFP BENCHMARKS AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) participated in a joint briefing with the HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) on the recommendations of the Fisheries Innovation Workgroup (FIW), and reviewed Agenda Item I.5 Attachment 1, Attachment 2, and Supplemental FIW Report 1. Based on this review, the HMSMT provides the following recommendations:

1. Adopt the proposed Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Evaluation Framework.
2. Support the recommendations developed by the FIW.
3. Task the HMSMT with implementing FIW recommendations related to EFP evaluation and reporting.
4. Task the HMSMT with reviewing and updating the HMS Roadmap.

Proposed EFP Evaluation Framework

The HMSMT reviewed the proposed EFP Evaluation Framework, including its application to Goal B of the HMS Roadmap, the role of performance metrics and benchmarks, and the proposed economic viability and bycatch performance metrics for evaluating EFP performance. The HMSMT believes the framework provides a structured and transparent approach for evaluating EFP outcomes and informing future Council consideration of innovative HMS fishing practices.

FIW Recommendations

The HMSMT supports the FIW recommendations related to EFP evaluation (Supplemental FIW Report 1). The proposed approach relies on the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) providing technical expertise supporting EFP evaluation reports. The HMSMT supports this approach and views documentation of the methodology as important to ensure transparency and maintain the capacity to produce future EFP evaluation reports in a consistent manner.

If the Council decides to develop an EFP web page as recommended by the FIW, the HMSMT recommends consulting with the HMSMT and HMSAS to leverage feedback from agencies and industry on content.

EFP evaluation and reporting

To implement the EFP Evaluation Framework, the HMSMT recommends a phased process beginning with detailed documentation of the Bayesian analysis of bycatch-to-catch ratios. The HMSMT supports review of this methodology by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The HMSMT discussed the proposed timeline for receiving EFP data, compiling evaluation components, and developing a comprehensive EFP evaluation report for Council consideration. If the EFP framework is adopted at this meeting, the HMSMT can recommend a schedule for these next steps.

HMS Roadmap

The HMSMT also supports the FIW recommendation that the Council task the HMSMT with reviewing and updating the HMS Roadmap to reflect progress made through the FIW process. As the HMSMT has served as the primary body responsible for shepherding updates to the HMS

Roadmap, it is well positioned to incorporate FIW recommendations, synthesize completed work products, update action items, and integrate the proposed EFP Evaluation Framework into the broader Roadmap structure. The HMSMT recommends the Council add an HMS Roadmap agenda item, incorporating the EFP Evaluation Framework and other Roadmap updates to the June 2027 Council meeting agenda.

PFMC
11/15/2026