

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE APRIL 2001 MEETING

Salmon Management

IDENTIFICATION OF STOCKS NOT MEETING ESCAPEMENT GOALS FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS

The Council identified three natural stocks that have not met their FMP spawner escapement objectives in the past three years: Upper Columbia summer chinook, Grays Harbor fall chinook, and Queets spring/summer chinook. All three stocks qualify as exceptions to the FMP overfishing concern procedures by virtue of impacts of less than 5% in Council-managed ocean salmon fisheries during the base years used for impact modeling. The Salmon Technical Team (STT) confirmed that Council fisheries continue to have impacts on these stocks of less than 5%.

METHODOLOGY REVIEWS FOR 2001

The Council adopted the Scientific and Statistical Committee proposed methodology review schedule for 2001. The review includes the new Klamath Ocean Harvest Model, recalibration of the coho FRAM, and modification of the chinook FRAM.

FINAL ACTION ON 2001 MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The Council adopted the salmon management measures for 2001 offshore fisheries. Specific management measures for each individual area in California, Oregon, and Washington, such as season dates, quotas, bag limits, hook requirements, and halibut ratios will be available on the Council website by April 16.

In general, for recreational fisheries:

- Seasons North of Cape Falcon open slightly earlier and have larger hatchery coho quotas than last year;
- Seasons off Oregon proper are similar, but with a larger allowed catch of hatchery coho salmon;
- Seasons in California are slightly longer, with no Fort Bragg closure in July this year.

In general, commercial seasons are similar to last year, with slightly more opportunity allowed in certain areas, such as Fort Bragg, California in May.

Marine Reserves

CHANNEL ISLAND NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY (CINMS) PROGRAM

The Council directed the Executive Director to prepare a letter to the CINMS Manager to facilitate further consideration by the Council of any fishing regulations associated with final establishment of a marine reserve in the Channel Islands Sanctuary. The letter will request information on: (1) answers to several questions posed by Council Advisory Bodies at the April Council meeting; (2) relevant language from the authorities under which the CINMS operates and how fishing regulations are to be set, including the Sanctuaries Act, the general regulations, and the Designation Document for the CINMS, and (3) a specific

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE APRIL 2001 MEETING

written statement of what action the Council is being asked to take on this issue. The letter will also request that when a final proposal is submitted to the Council it completely document and include the necessary environmental and other assessment documents.

Coastal Pelagic Species

NMFS REPORT

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announced the in-season regulation to reduce the allowable catch of Pacific mackerel to one metric ton per vessel, when taken incidentally while targeting other species. This action was taken in response to attainment of the Pacific mackerel harvest guideline.

REVIEW CAPACITY GOAL AND RELATED ISSUES

The Council unanimously adopted a motion directing the CPS Management Team to develop an FMP Amendment with language describing capacity goal for the Coastal Pelagic Species finfish fishery, conditions for permit transferability, and a future review process on permit transfers. A capacity goal was adopted corresponding to the existing capacity, or 65 vessels. Permit transferability would be allowed, but restricted such that there be no significant increase in vessel gross registered tonnage capacity as a result of the transfer. In the event fleet capacity changes by 5% as a result of the individual grace allowance in permit transfers, the transfer provisions would be re-evaluated. It is intended to schedule consideration of a draft Amendment at the September 2001 Council Meeting.

UPDATE ON SQUID MAXIMUM SUSTAINABLE YIELD METHODOLOGIES WORKSHOP

The Council approved the terms of reference for a much-anticipated STAR Panel and workshop on squid MSY to be held May 14-17, 2001 at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center in LaJolla, California.

Groundfish Management

GROUNDFISH STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Council approved another meeting of the Strategic Plan Oversight Committee (SPOC) to discuss further implementation measures. The Council approved, for the purpose of implementing the Strategic Plan, the list of priorities recommended by the SPOC. The meeting will occur via conference call on a date yet to be determined, with an agenda that includes at least (1) the establishment of an Implementation Development Team for trawl permit stacking, (2) composition and further purpose of a Council Marine Reserves Advisory Committee, (3) limited entry permitting in the current open access fishery, and (4) an assignment to Council staff for a comprehensive status report on all ongoing efforts related to West Coast marine reserves, protected areas, or sanctuaries.

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE APRIL 2001 MEETING

RECONSIDERATION OF 1997 HUNTINGTON FLATS DECISION

The Council took no action to reconsider the 1997 decision to recommend that NMFS promulgate regulations closing Huntington Flats to setnet gear. Thus, its previous action in support of this closure stands.

DISCARD ADJUSTMENT FOR BOCACCIO AND LINGCOD

The Council corrected an oversight that occurred at the November 2000 meeting by adopting assumed discard rates of 16% for bocaccio and 20% for lingcod. The limited entry and open access allocations will be revised as necessary to account for this assumed bycatch. However, this does not require adjustments to trip limits at this time.

STATUS OF FISHERIES AND CONSIDERATION OF IN-SEASON ADJUSTMENTS

The Council adopted the following in-season changes: (1) for commercial open access fishers south of Cape Mendocino, the monthly cumulative limit for nearshore rockfish will be reduced from 1,800 pounds per two months to 1,200 pounds per two months; (2) for nearshore rockfish north of Cape Mendocino, the cumulative two-month limit for both open access and limited entry will be 7,000 pounds; (3) for limited entry trawl vessels, the cumulative trip limit for vessels using small footropes will be 50,000 pounds of flatfish other than Dover sole, not more than 15,000 pounds of which may be petrale sole and not more than 10,000 pounds of which may be arrowtooth flounder; (4) for vessels using large footrope trawls, the trip limit for arrowtooth flounder will be reduced to 15,000 pounds in May and 5,000 pounds per trip June to October; and (5) allow salmon trollers to land up to one pound of yellow-tail rockfish per two pounds of salmon, up to 300 pounds per month. This applies north of Cape Mendocino.

In addition, the Council engaged in preliminary discussion about in-season changes later in the summer, associated with a state observer program in the Washington trawl fishery targeting arrowtooth flounder.

Finally, the Council heard from the three coastal state government seats about the requirements to use bycatch excluder devices in the state-managed pink shrimp fisheries, to further protect canary rockfish. The Council tasked the Executive Director with sending a letter to each of the coastal state fish and wildlife management agencies recommending that state regulations be adopted involving bycatch excluder devices in pink shrimp fisheries.

FUTURE GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

The Council adopted significant changes to the current management process and schedule for groundfish fisheries. The most significant changes adopted include moving from a two-Council-meeting process to a three-Council-meeting process, with preliminary ABC and OY levels adopted at the June meeting, final ABC and OY levels and tentative management measures at the September meeting, and final decisions on management measures at the November meeting. The Council also directed further work be conducted on the question

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE APRIL 2001 MEETING

of whether the Council would shift from adopting management specifications and measures on an annual basis, as is currently the case, to adopting a regulatory scheme for a two-year period.

REBUILDING PLAN STATUS REPORT

The Council approved the Scientific and Statistical Committee's terms of reference for rebuilding analyses for over-fished groundfish stocks. The Council deferred adoption of the draft canary rockfish rebuilding plan to allow more time for public review until their June Meeting, and the Council tasked the Council staff with revising the schedule for consideration of six other rebuilding plans that are either being modified or considered for the first time.

BYCATCH FULL RETENTION OPTIONS

The Council directed the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to pursue development of management measure options for mandatory retention for at least some element of the commercial fishery. The GMT was instructed to review and consider the elements of an experimental prototype program approved by the Council in 1998, but never implemented for a variety of contingent logistical reasons. At least one option was to include mandatory retention of all shelf and slope rockfish caught in commercial fisheries.

Pacific Halibut Management

PROPOSED INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS FOR SABLEFISH LONGLINE FISHERY NORTH OF POINT CHEHALIS

The Council adopted the proposed framework mechanism to establish annual management measures in 2001 and future years. The Council also approved, for public review leading to a final decision at the June Council meeting, three options to retain incidentally caught halibut in the 2001 sablefish longline fishery north of Point Chehalis. These options are to establish an allowable:

- ratio of pounds of halibut per pound of sablefish landed;
- ratio of a number of halibut per pound of sablefish landed;
- ratio of a number of halibut per pound of sablefish landed in combination with a season cap per vessel.

COUNCIL DECISIONS AT THE APRIL 2001 MEETING

Administrative and Other Matters

NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The Council approved the draft November Council Meeting minutes as final, subject to one change in a salmon reference.

APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY BODIES OR OTHER COUNCIL POSITIONS

The Council Chair announced two appointments. Stuart Ellis was appointed as the northern Tribal representative on the Habitat Steering Group. Philip Anderson was appointed as the representative to the US-Canada Albacore Treaty negotiations.

JUNE 2001 COUNCIL MEETING DRAFT AGENDA

The Council adopted a draft agenda for the June Council Meeting in San Francisco. This draft agenda will be available on the Council website well in advance of the June 11-15, 2001 meeting.