

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON CONSIDERATION OF INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) met with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to discuss progress of this year's fishery and possible inseason adjustments. The GAP offers the following recommendations and comments on proposed inseason adjustments to ongoing groundfish fisheries.

### Limited Entry Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery North of 36° N. Latitude

The GAP understands there is an accelerated pace to this year's limited entry fixed gear daily-trip-limit fishery that risks early attainment of the sector allocation and possible early closure of the fishery. The GAP understands the consideration of the very restrictive limits proposed by the GMT. While this will cause economic stress to the sector, these restrictive limits are better than an early fishery closure, which will cause greater harm to the sector and affected fishing communities. The GAP therefore supports the GMT option of reducing the current trip limits of 1,000 lbs/week, not to exceed 4,000 lbs/2 months to **800 lbs/week, not to exceed 1,600 lbs/2 months beginning on September 1, 2012 through the end of the year.**

### Limited Entry Fixed Gear South of 34°27' N. Latitude

*Minor Shelf Rockfish South:* The GAP recommends an increase in the Minor Shelf Rockfish South cumulative landing limit from 3,000 lbs/2 months to **4,000 lbs/2 months beginning as soon as possible through the end of the year.** The GAP notes that there are no conservation issues with shelf rockfish and this will reduce regulatory discards and provide some economic relief to the few fishermen in this sector who fish in the southern California Bight.

*Bocaccio:* The GAP recommends an increase in the bocaccio cumulative landing limit from 300 lbs/2 months to **500 lbs/2 months beginning as soon as possible through the end of the year.** The GAP notes that there is an adequate buffer in the scorecard and this will reduce regulatory discards. This limit increase will not significantly increase bocaccio impacts since there are only a few fishermen in this sector who fish in the southern California Bight.

### Implementation of the Surplus Carry-Over Provision from 2011 to 2012 in the Limited Entry Trawl Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Fishery

The GAP discussed the NMFS decision on the issuance of surplus carry-over quota from the 2011 IFQ fishery to the 2012 fishery. The GAP is concerned that surplus carry-over quota for Pacific whiting and sablefish were not issued this year. Many fishermen intentionally left quota unharvested last year expecting that this quota would be added to accounts this year. To not issue this surplus quota this year was a costly surprise to many IFQ fishermen.

The GAP understands the reasons for the decision to not issue surplus carry-over quota for Pacific whiting is tied to the new international forum for Pacific whiting. If a remedy is developed then, the GAP requests input through the Council process on this remedy at a time when such input is expedient.

The GAP also understands that the NMFS decision keeps open the possibility of issuing some or all of the surplus carry-over sablefish quota later this year if analysis of projected impacts indicates less risk of exceeding the annual catch limit (ACL). The GAP has heard that the sablefish carry-over amounts are 85 mt north of 36° N. latitude and 20 mt in the south. With these understandings, the GAP recommends further analysis of the risk of exceeding 2012 sablefish ACLs in time for reconsideration at the September Council meeting.

PFMC  
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