

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FISHERY MANAGEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT 13, ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) heard a presentation from Mr. Mike Burner and Dr. Kevin Hill on Amendment 13 to the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP): Measures for Integrating New Provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and National Standard 1 Guidelines into Coastal Pelagic Species Management.

The Subpanel engaged in extensive internal discussions with the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) regarding technical aspects and implications of various options. Dr. Kevin Hill provided an explanation for the proposed P* policy alternative.

The CPSAS recommends the following:

2.1 Summary Stock Classifications

A majority of the CPSAS supports Alternative 1 - all species currently listed in the FMP are “in the fishery,” including krill, which is currently listed in the prohibited harvest category.

Regarding the addition of forage species not currently in the CPS FMP, the CPSAS points out that bycatch of species not already in the FMP is low. Further, incidental catches and interactions of non-target stocks are documented annually in the Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation document.

To avoid applying a piecemeal approach to individual FMPs, and the resultant duplication of effort and cost, a majority of the CPSAS believes the Ecosystem FMP is the appropriate place to include forage species. The CPSAS encourages the Council to move forward expeditiously with development of the E-FMP, and agrees these forage species should be monitored to inform and improve ecosystem-based management.

The conservation representative on the CPSAS supports Alternative 3: adding additional forage species to the CPS FMP as ecosystem component species. In doing so, he urges the Council to recognize the ecosystem services these species provide, and the desire to develop management measures that protect these forage species. He notes further that while the Pacific Council may take up the issue of forage species management in the E-FMP, the purpose and scope of that analysis is still undecided.

2.2.1 Status Determination Criteria Alternatives

A majority of the CPSAS concurs with the CPSMT recommendation to support Alternative 2, maintain existing Stock Determination Criteria (SDCs) and develop a maximum sustainable yield (MSY) proxy for the northern subpopulation of Northern anchovy.

The conservation representative voiced concern that Table 3.2.1, CPS FMP specifications for SDCs, is incomplete. He does not support either alternative for SDCs, as neither approach meets the requirements in National Standard I, or the guidelines for how to calculate minimum stock size threshold (MSST). For example, the analysis should include an alternative for setting MSST at 1/2 Bmsy for the central population of northern anchovy and Pacific mackerel; and MSST proxy values for the northern subpopulation of Northern anchovy, market squid and jack mackerel.

2.3 Overfishing Levels, Acceptable Biological Catch, and Annual Catch Limits for actively managed stocks

The CPSAS reiterates the critical importance of more comprehensive research to understand the full extent of both the Pacific sardine and Pacific mackerel populations. We thank the Council for continuing to support the industry-sponsored surveys. We vigorously encourage the National Marine Fisheries Service to increase funding for Pacific sardine and mackerel cooperative research, as well as other CPS species.

If the Council chooses Alternative 3 for actively managed stocks as a preferred alternative, the potential for further, significant restrictions on fisheries is a strong likelihood unless scientific uncertainties are adequately addressed. The only way to reduce uncertainty is to do the research. The CPSAS could endorse Alternative 3 as a better management tool if the scientific research is developed to reduce uncertainty.

2.3.2 Monitored Species

The majority of the CPSAS supports Alternative 1 - would maintain the default harvest control rules as modified, in light of the low harvest levels on CPS finfish.

The CPSAS concurs with the statement in the Draft Environmental Assessment: “Market squid are also a monitored species under the CPS FMP, but the current MSY proxy for market squid is completely different from the finfish species, and uses an egg escapement method” [Agenda Item F.2a, Attachment 1, at Section 4.3.2.1].

2.3.3 Sector-specific Annual Catch Limits (ACLs)

The CPSAS acknowledges the importance of the live bait fishery and supports an outcome that preserves optimum fishing opportunity. In that regard, the CPSAS supports Alternative 4, adding sector-specific ACLs to the FMP framework as a management tool and assessing their applicability on an annual basis. Regarding a sector-specific ACL for exempted fishing permit research, the CPSAS believes this would be applied as needed.

2.4.4 Summary of ACT and Accountability Measures Alternatives

The CPSAS recommends that the CPS FMP supports Alternative 2 – Develop ACTs only for actively managed stocks. Under this option, the CPSAS agrees that setting aside a portion of the Pacific mackerel and Pacific sardine ACTs for incidental harvest in other CPS fisheries should be continued as is done currently.

PFMC
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