

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
INITIAL CONSIDERATION OF REVISIONS TO THE GROUND FISH BIENNIAL  
MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report from Ms. Kelly Ames on potential revisions to the groundfish biennial harvest specifications and management measures process. The GAP agrees with the concern reflected in the Council staff White Paper (Agenda Item H.1a, Supplemental Attachment 2) regarding problems with timely implementation of harvest specs and management measures, and believes that revisions should be considered.

In discussing harvest specifications and management measures, the GAP has several comments that inform our view on process revisions.

- Presently, we are fishing up to six years out of phase with the data. It does not matter what we do with the process if the data going in is out of date or no good – garbage in, garbage out.
- Some members of the GAP believe implementation of the Trawl Individual Quota Program, in addition to wrapping up several other major fishery management plan amendments, will minimize pressure on the process.
- If we change our approach to harvest specifications and management measures to offer more breathing room, we should not force additional requirements into the process. If we make significant changes on the one hand and then add significant new burdens on the other (as has happened in the past) we will continue to be behind, scrambling to get things done on time etc.
- There is great concern that a longer time horizon would limit management flexibility in response to changing circumstances or data. It is imperative that the process remain/become responsive.
- The GAP supports the concept of a committee to help design revisions to the harvest specifications and management measures process.