

C2 Observer Committee Reports (FMAC & PCFMAC)



Sara Cleaver, NPFMC

June 2023



Recent Committee Meetings and Agenda Items

January



PCFMAC (Jan) Takeaways

The committee recommended that it is worth continuing to look at adding stratification by FMP.

The committee reiterated the need for the suite of monitoring designs to be presented under hypothetical high, medium, and low budget scenarios in order to compare the designs and their resulting coverage rates.

Discussed ideas outside of the sampling design such as zero-selection pool (for Sept PCFMAC agenda)



FMAC Recommendations: 2022 Annual Report

The FMAC recommended **the Council produce a “Spotlight” highlighting resources and services, such as the online training on ensuring a safe work environment for observers, that are available through the NOAA Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Program.**



FMAC Recommendations: 2022 Annual Report

The FMAC recommended **having an abbreviated annual report for the 2023 fisheries, a full annual report for the 2024 fisheries, and recommended the following items be included in future annual reports:**

- 1) At-sea compliance data from EM in terms of the amount of catch monitored.**
- 2) A summary of issues highlighted in the previous year's annual report or in committee recommendations and how those issues have been addressed.**
- 3) A summary and associated metrics on EM in the pelagic trawl fishery, similar to the summary that exists for fixed gear EM.**
- 4) Reintroduction of bias metrics for the next full report (2024 fishery), such as monitoring effects and information on how mixed-gear trips may bias data.**



FMAC Recommendations: 2022 Annual Report

- The FMAC recommended **the Council write a letter to the National Observer Program to inquire about all six regions using a standardized template for observer costs per day and to obtain observer harassment information from other regions.**



FMAC Recommendations: 2024 ADP

- The committee noted that evaluation of the monitoring designs under high, medium, and low budget scenarios was still needed. Analytical staff are going to provide this between June and October.
- Discussion of fishing across multiple FMP areas

The committee recommended/supported:

- **the NMFS recommendations for the 2024 ADP (p68-69 of the 2022 Observer Annual Report), with some modifications and discussion points.**
- **continued work on cost efficiency integrated analysis, including evaluation of the 3 stratification options and 4 allocation methods.**
- **the proposed evaluation metrics listed in the presentation (i.e., # trips, variance in expenses, burden share, timeliness, PSC, etc.)**



FMAC Recommendations: 2024 ADP (cntd.)

The committee recommended/supported the following:

- **continued evaluation of zero coverage.**
 - **Look at fixed-gear EM vessels that have not fished for groundfish in multiple years.**
- **continued evaluation of two solutions to high cancellation rates in HAL stratum:**
 - **1) having the next trip inherit the observer-selected trip, or**
 - **2) increase programmed rate in ODDS in order to achieve the target rate.**



FMAC Recommendations: 2024 ADP (cntd.)

- **The committee supported continued collaboration with industry on EM development projects highlighted in NMFS recommendations.**
- **recommended the analysts consult with fixed-gear EM service providers on the costs of inactive vessels and how costs would scale to different budgets.**
- **It would be helpful for the Council to clarify their preference on increasing funding for EM video review to ensure timely data versus continuing with current staffing levels that are causing delays, as data timeliness is one of the evaluation metrics and could inform analysis of cost efficiencies.**
- **recommended that NMFS bring back further information on the feasibility of hiring observers as federal employees**



FMAC: Review of EM issues and Prioritization

- Shift in timeline for NFWF grants
- **The committee recommended a virtual or hybrid meeting be scheduled in September, in conjunction with PCFMAC if possible, to discuss potential NFWF proposals and provide prioritization of such to the Council and NMFS.**
- Prioritization of cost efficiency versus multiple EM providers:
 - **recommended the Council consider formation of a subgroup to develop a process for transitioning to a more competitive marketplace as EM programs mature.**



FMAC: Other Issues

- Observer availability, training and endorsements
- Data deletions

The committee found merit in moving both forward as written in the public comment letter. This includes:

- 1) requesting the Council direct staff to develop a discussion paper on the observer endorsements issue as described in items 1a-d in the letter, and**
- 2) a presentation from the agency on the data deletion issue as described in the letter.**



Committee Scheduling and Future Agenda Topics

- Next meeting (FMAC/PCFMAC: September 2023
 - EM projects
 - Draft 2024 ADP, making recommendations on the final design for implementation
- **The committee recommended that the PCFMAC's September agenda include a space for proposals to change the service delivery model for the partial coverage program, to eliminate the federal contract and provide market-based alternatives.**



Action before the AP/Council:

recommendations on adjustments to the final suite of monitoring designs, such as:

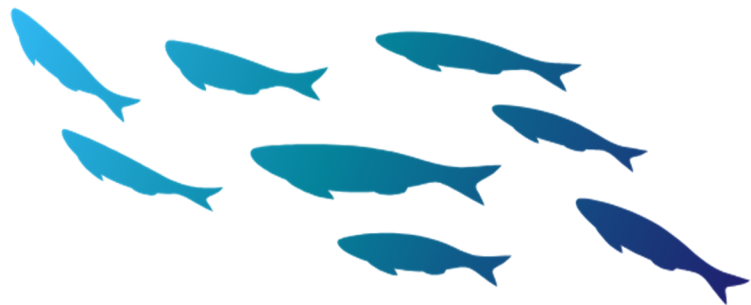
- evaluation criteria in addition to those included in NMFS' report.
- stratification or allocation schemes to not pursue further

There will not be sufficient time to analyze major changes to the sampling designs after this meeting.

The draft 2024 ADP with draft coverage rates will be available at the October 2023 Council meeting.

The final design will be recommended for implementation at that meeting, and the final ADP will be available prior to the December Council meeting.





Questions?

Sara Cleaver

Sara.cleaver@noaa.gov

907-271-2809

