



# D5 Subarea Apportionment Report

June 2025 Council Meeting

## Action Memo

Council Staff: Sara Cleaver

Action Required: Review the report on subarea apportionments and provide recommendations as appropriate

## BACKGROUND

In December 2024, the Council requested that SSC and Council leadership communicate with staff regarding possible approaches for subarea apportionments of Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) within the groundfish harvest specifications process and bring back options to the Council and SSC for discussion and decision. Most recently, this topic focused on issues related to the spatial management of rockfish in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA).<sup>1</sup> The Council intends that possible new approach(es) for subarea apportionments of ABC would consider:

- the intended purpose of subarea apportionments of ABC
- the role of Council advisory bodies in recommending those apportionments
- the application of the [spatial management policy](#) (SMP), and
- timing within the process.

This report is intended to assist the SSC/Council with establishing a process for the Council's annual recommendations for stocks and stock complexes managed as target species under the Groundfish FMPs. This includes options for new terminology for subarea apportionments of ABCs, in recognition that apportionments of ABC are not the 'true' ABC of a stock or stock complex. This report is an assimilation of staff expertise, discussions within the harvest specifications process at the Plan Team, SSC, and Council, and conversations between staff (Council, AKRO, NOAA GC, and AFSC), SSC members, and Council members. This report is intended to be a starting point for discussion.

At this meeting, the Council may provide input on a revised approach for the apportionment process so that relevant guidance can be provided to the Plan Teams and SSC prior to the upcoming harvest specifications cycle. Depending on the Council's recommendations, further communications between staff, Council, and SSC leadership may be needed over the summer.

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<sup>1</sup> See Oct 2024 [GOA Rockfish Spatial Mgmt discussion paper](#)