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## NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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# E1 Groundfish Management Policy Review

June 2026 Council Meeting

## Action Memo

Council Staff: Katie Latanich

Action Required:

1. Review the Groundfish Management Policy, and recent Council actions for alignment with policy
2. Review Ecosystem Committee recommendations
3. Consider whether any modifications to the Management Policy are warranted, or whether the Council should initiate additional activities to fulfill the Management Policy.

## BACKGROUND

The Council is undertaking a periodic review of the Groundfish Management Policy contained within the Fishery Management Plans for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) (Groundfish FMPs). The full Management Policy was adopted in 2004, and consists of a Management Approach statement, 9 goals, and 45 objectives. The Council committed to regularly reviewing the Management Policy as a means of adaptive management. Reviews are conducted approximately every 3 years, with the most recent review occurring in 2022 for the years 2019-2021. Past reviews have not resulted in any changes to the Management Policy in the FMPs.

Staff have prepared a review document to support the Council's review for the period 2022-2025, and in response to Council direction, it also provides a longer term perspective on the history of groundfish management under the policy, including the Council's work on climate resilience planning and incorporation of Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and subsistence information (LKTKS).

**The Council's management of the groundfish fisheries during the review period continues to generally align with and support the Management Policy as written, and staff did not identify any strong concerns or mismatches between the Management Policy and current Council practices.** However, this document does identify opportunities for further Council discussion, including where the interpretation or implementation of a goal and/or objective may have evolved since it was originally written.

**The Council could consider multiple paths for responding to this review document, including no further action. The Council could also consider whether, based on the review, it is useful to revise or update elements of the Management Policy in the FMPs** for purposes of communicating about the Council's values and priorities, providing guidance to staff, and providing transparency regarding how the Council considers information and tradeoffs in its management recommendations. Any changes to the existing Groundfish Management Policy would require FMP amendments, and could be undertaken through updates, revisions, or other changes to the goals, objectives, and/or Management Approach components. The Council could also consider initiating other actions in response to this review, for example development of informal Council policy statements that live outside the FMP or a workplan prioritizing additional actions the Council wishes to undertake under the Management Policy. Additional examples of potential next steps are outlined in Section 4 of the document.

The Ecosystem Committee met on May 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss this groundfish review document, and their report includes recommendations for Council action.