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2026

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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E3 Economic and Community Indicator Reports

June 2026

Action Memo for SSC

Council Staff: Anna Henry
Other Presenters: Dr. Russel Dame (AFSC), Dr. Sarah Wise (AFSC)
Action Required: Receive reports and provide feedback or recommendations for the format of a standard December agenda item, as necessary.

BACKGROUND

This agenda item is for the SSC only.

The Economic and Community Indicator Reports include relevant information from the Economic Status of the Groundfish Fisheries off Alaska (Groundfish Econ SAFE) and the Annual Community Engagement and Participation Overview (ACEPO). The information highlighted at this meeting will include recent and important economic trends in the groundfish fisheries and how these connect to social impacts in communities that rely on these fisheries.

In the future, staff intend to schedule presentations of this information (among others) at the December 2026 meeting in a “contextual information for Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting” agenda item as was originally planned this past December but was postponed due to the lapse in federal appropriations (see more below). The current review is scheduled for this June meeting to provide the SSC an advance review of these products and an opportunity to provide feedback as to the most relevant information that should be provided in December when SSC agenda time is more limited. Conforming with the Council [policy](#) that socio-economic factors should be considered during the TAC setting process at the Council and not incorporated into the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) recommendations, these products are primarily oriented towards the Advisory Panel and the Council, for purposes of TAC-setting, rather than the SSC’s role of recommending ABC and OFL. However, the SSC can provide useful recommendations on methodology and content relative to its role in reviewing Best Scientific Information Available. It may also be useful for the SSC to comment on when and how often the SSC should review these products.

Background documents posted under this agenda item include the most recent published Groundfish Economic SAFE and ACEPO as well as a “Brief on the Economic Status of the Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska” document that is being developed by the AFSC to highlight some of the key takeaways and summaries from the larger Groundfish Econ SAFE document.

History

The ideal timing to present highlighted information from the Econ SAFE and ACEPO is during the December meeting, along with groundfish harvest specifications. However, due to limited agenda time, these products have not been presented since 2023, and prior to that, were presented at the February or April meetings. This was first commented on by the SSC in October 2023, initiating a multi-year effort to address social and economic information in the process as detailed in the table below.

Meeting Date	Relevant activities, SSC reports or Council motions
October 2023 SSC meeting	SSC comments (p.2) on the paucity of socioeconomic information available during the groundfish specifications process
December 2023 SSC and Council meeting	SSC recommendations (p.4) for improved integration of economic, social, and community information into the management process Council motion that NOAA and Council staff recommend species-level socio-economic indicators appropriate for the Ecosystem and Socioeconomic Profiles (ESPs) and other refinements to the timing or aggregation of information presented in ACEPO and the Economic SAFE reports.
April 2024 Council/NMFS staff internal working group	Council staff met with NOAA staff from the Alaska Regional Office and AFSC Economic and Social Sciences Research Program to discuss 1) current products that include social, economic, and community information, 2) plans to incorporate new information into existing products, and 3) longer-term ideas to address this issue. The group determined that, given the concurrent timing of ESPs with the specifications process and current issues in the sablefish fishery, the sablefish ESP should be the first product to target for including new socioeconomic indicators.
June 2024 SSC subgroup	Council and AFSC staff met with the SSC economic and social science subgroup to discuss plans for improvements on how and when available social and economic information is shared with the SSC and Council and what new information is needed. The subgroup supported a plan to begin with improvements to the sablefish ESP with the goal of expanding to further ESPs. Future plans included creating a roadmap of economic and social information that is available and relevant to harvest specifications, and to consider revising the content and/or production schedule of Econ SAFEs and ACEPO to maintain relevancy of these documents for TAC setting/management decisions.
October 2024 SSC and Council meeting	SSC reviewed proposed additions to the suite of indicators identified in the sablefish ESP and provided recommendations (p. 36) regarding refinement for future ESPs. Council motion supports a priority to compile social and economic information to meet the needs of using the best scientific information available and informing Council decision-making and TAC-setting, including the efforts of the existing technical SSC economic and socioeconomic subgroup and will review pilot work on sablefish in December 2024. Noting that this supports objective 3 of the climate workplan (develop and implement new tools for the harvest specifications process, to adapt to risk in the face of uncertainty due to climate-driven marine ecosystem changes).

Meeting Date	Relevant activities, SSC reports or Council motions
December 2024 SSC and Council meeting	<p>Council and NMFS staff prepared a brief description of existing economic and social information that is available and relevant to harvest specifications including the Groundfish Econ SAFE, ACEPO, ESPs and inseason management reports.</p> <p>SSC expressed appreciation for this information and recommended (p. 12) a meeting of the SSC Economic and Socioeconomic (ESE) subgroup to discuss the specifics of a future agenda item.</p> <p>The SSC also reviewed (p.16) the final sablefish ESP with revised and updated indices for consideration as part of final harvest specifications in December 2024 and supported flexibility in tailoring indicator selection to individual species as well as more streamlined ESPs for more stable fisheries. AFSC staff continue to incorporate those SSC recommendations into the development of ESPs, leading to more robust socioeconomic indicators in multiple groundfish ESPs, including the Atka mackerel, GOA Pacific cod, GOA pollock, and EBS Pacific Cod ESPs, that are included in the SAFE appendices and presented to/reviewed by the SSC during the specifications process.</p> <p>Council motion establishing a climate resilience workplan included guidance to incorporate forecasts of climate and ecosystem conditions in the specifications processes, including in the socioeconomic sections of ESRs and ESPs that are used in the Risk Tables (i.e., for ABC); and in the context of informing the TAC-setting process. Climate information on risk could be communicated via updates and expanded climate risk sections of the ACEPO.</p>
January 2025 SSC subgroup	<p>Council, NMFS AKRO, and AFSC staff met with the SSC economic and social science subgroup to discuss a June agenda item that would include a broader discussion of social and economic information. Planned agenda topics included: 1) background on the requirements/guidance for social and economic information in the fishery management process including National Standards, 2) ABC/TAC-setting process and social and economic information, 3) the existing products that include social and economic information (ESPs, ESRs, Econ SAFEs, ACEPO, in-season management reports).</p>
June 2025 SSC and Council meeting	<p>Due to changing staff capacity and future uncertainties, the planned agenda item for a larger discussion on social and economic information was postponed and subsequently rescaled.</p>
September 2025 SSC subgroup	<p>Council staff met with SSC Subgroup to discuss a paired down agenda item regarding social and economic information that could occur in December 2025 given continued capacity constraints.</p>
December 2025 SSC and Council meeting	<p>“Contextual Information Supporting Groundfish Harvest Specifications” agenda item planned to organize multiple products that provide relevant context to inform the groundfish harvest specifications process (BSAI and GOA year-end Inseason Management Reports, ESRs, and Economic and Community Indicator Reports) under a single agenda item. This included both existing information that has historically been presented to the Council only during separate agenda items at the December meeting as well as new or updated products that had not previously been included on the December agenda. This new organization was intended to be a pilot approach for 2025, to present a variety of information relevant to harvest specifications in a more logical and efficient format, and to clearly present information sources that influence Council TAC-setting. Unfortunately, due to the lapse in Federal appropriations from October 1 - November 12, 2025, the products that were intended to be included under this item were not available and the agenda item was postponed.</p>
January 2026 SSC subgroup	<p>SSC subgroup updated by email on plan for this June 2026 agenda item.</p>