



C2 Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology

February 2021 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Sara Cleaver, Angela Forristall
Action Required: 1. Review SBRM report
2. Adopt or revise recommendations

BACKGROUND

On January 19, 2017, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a final rule ([82 FR 6317](#)) establishing national guidance for compliance with this requirement. As required by 50 CFR 600.1610(b), Councils, in coordination with NMFS, must review their FMPs and make any necessary changes so all FMPs are consistent with the guidance by February 21, 2022.

The national guidance, codified at 50 CFR 600.1605(a) defines a standardized reporting methodology as “an established, consistent procedure or procedures used to collect, record, and report bycatch data in a fishery.” This information, in conjunction with other relevant sources, is used to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery and inform the development of conservation and management measures to minimize bycatch. **The regulations require that a FMP must identify the required procedure that constitutes the standardized reporting methodology for the fishery and explain how the procedure meets the purpose to collect, record, and report bycatch data.** The proposed and final rules explain that a standardized bycatch reporting methodology (SBRM) could include one or more combination of data collection and reporting programs such as observer programs, electronic monitoring, and industry reports (e.g. landing reports or “fish tickets”).

The SBRM final rule requires the Council to explain how the SBRMs meet the stated purpose in the rule based on the following considerations: characteristics of bycatch in the fishery, the feasibility of the reporting methodology, the uncertainty of data resulting from the methodology, and how the data will be used to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery. The Council must address these considerations when reviewing or establishing a SBRM.

In February 2020, the Council received a report on current FMPs managed by NPFMC and their consistency with the SBRM Final Rule. At that meeting, the Council determined that the groundfish and Arctic FMPs were consistent with the SBRM final rule, while the BSAI Crab, Scallop, and Salmon FMPs needed further analysis to implement FMP amendments to be consistent. The Alaska Regional Office has used the Council review and determined that the SBRMs in the Arctic, BSAI Groundfish, and GOA Groundfish FMPs are fully consistent with the SBRM rule and meet the purpose in 50 C.F.R. § 600.1600 (see letter from NMFS attached on the e-Agenda).

The report that the Council will receive at this meeting comprises the analysis of the SBRMs in the BSAI Crab, Scallop, and Salmon FMPs on behalf of the Council for consistency with the national guidance in general, and the four considerations above. Should the Council approve the recommendations in the report, the NMFS Alaska Regional Office will use this analysis, along with any other relevant information, to make FMP changes as necessary prior to the February 2022 deadline.