Do squid need conservation and management?

Target

Non-target

Yes. "in the fishery"

Maybe. Is it generally retained for sale or personal use?

Yes, generally

No, not generally

Yes. "in the fishery"

Status quo (no action)

Is it determined to be subject to overfishing, approaching overfished, and/or overfished?

Yes

No

Is it likely to become subject to overfishing or overfished, according to the best available information, in the absence of conservation and management measures? Decision based on this analysis for initial classification in the FMPs. In the future, the Council can assess whether to re-classify, based on future analysis of overfishing potential, or directed fishing potential.

Yes, it's likely.

No. Squid do not need federal conservation and management.

Ecosystem Component - classify for any of the following reasons (§600.310(d)(5)(iii)):
- o for data collection purposes;
- o for ecosystem considerations related to specification of OY;
- o to consider in developing conservation and management measures for the associated fishery; or
- o to address other ecosystem issues.

Decision-tree: "In the Fishery" vs. "Ecosystem Component" classification

Two alternatives and options are considered in this analysis.

Alternative 1 would continue to manage squids 'in the fishery' in both the BSAI and GOA groundfish FMPs. OFL, ABC, and TAC will continue to be set for squids in both areas. Stock assessments for squids would continue to be done annually.   Directed fishing for squids is allowed, however given the low TAC established annually for both the BSAI and GOA groundfish specifications, NMFS has determined that existing TAC levels are not sufficient to support a directed fishery in either region and thus continues to place squids in both areas on bycatch-only status. Therefore squids are taken only as incidental catch in groundfish fisheries (primarily pollock fisheries) in both regions.

Under Alternative 1, MRAs for squids as an incidental catch species are established at 20%. This allows vessels fishing for groundfish to retain a quantity of squids equal to, but no more than, 20% percent of the round weight or round weight equivalent of groundfish species open to directed fishing that are retained on board the vessel at any time during a fishing trip.

Alternative 2 would include squids in the ecosystem component category in both the BSAI and GOA groundfish FMPs. Catch specifications (OFL, ABC, TAC) would no longer be required. Directed fishing for squid species would be prohibited.

If selected, **Option 1** would require a periodically updated stock assessment for squid and catch monitoring would continue to occur.

Option 2 would establish an MRA for squid species as incidental catch in the BSAI and GOA consistent with current 20% at a level to discourage retention while allowing flexibility to prosecute groundfish fisheries.

Two suboptions of MRAs are also considered:

> **Suboption 1**: Establish MRA at 2% consistent with forage fish species
> **Suboption 2**: Establish MRA at 10%

The Council will undergo initial review of this analysis. In doing so, staff have identified several clarifications that may be needed from the Council. These are listed below.

1. It is unclear to what extent squid in BSAI and GOA meet the fourth (retention) requirement of the EC component.
2. The Problem statement needs to be revised to reflect observed retention rates for squid.
3. Absent an MRA under Alternative 2, the Council should provide direction as to what percentage amount of retention would constitute directed fishing, in order to meet the requirements of the ecosystem component category.
4. Under options 1 and 2 (to Alternative 2), the Council did not explicitly specify that Option 1 be selected if Option 2 is selected, thus some direction would be necessary under this circumstance in order to estimate compliance with the MRA.
5. National Standard guidelines are being revised by NMFS thus consideration should be given to the final NS1 guidelines in selecting a preferred management approach under both FMPs.

Summary of Management Measures in Alternative 1 and 2

Management Measure	Alt 1- No Action	Alt 2 - Ecosystem Component
Prohibit a Directed Fishery	**No** However NMFS has not opened squid to directed fishing	**Yes** prohibit directed fishing in regulations at 679.20(i)
Retention and sale	**Yes** Retention and sale allowed.	**No** Some small amount can be retained and sold. Need guidance on amount that qualifies as small.
Annual Harvest Specifications	**Yes** - annual stock assessment - TAC assessed in optimum yield	**No** - stock assessment optional (option 1 would provide for periodic assessment) - catch not assessed in optimum yield
Incidental Catch Management	**Yes** - MRA as incidental catch species = 20%	**Yes if Option 2 selected otherwise No** - MRA as incidental catch species = options for 20%, 10%, 2% - If option 2 not selected, Council must provide guidance on what % retention qualifies as 'directed fishing'
Recordkeeping and Reporting	**Yes** - require catch reporting	**Yes if Option 1 selected otherwise No** require catch reporting (option 1)