

Groundfish Workplan

At its February 2018 meeting¹, the Council conducted an annual review of its Programmatic Groundfish Management Policy², as required under the GOA and BSAI Groundfish FMPs. The review highlighted Council activities in 2017 that reflect continued fulfillment of the Groundfish Management Policy. The Groundfish Workplan³ is a tool that tracks Council actions within the year, in the context of the Management Policy, and is updated for every meeting. The table below provides a two-meeting tracking tool for Council actions. This and prior versions of the table are available on the Council website (www.npfmc.org).

The Management Objectives established under the Groundfish Management Policy were intended to support decision-making under the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMPs. Although the Policy’s EBFM approach and comprehensive nature of its objectives are reflected in actions outside of the Groundfish FMPs, these other actions are not included in the table. A special note on the **Bering Sea Ecosystem Plan** is included at the end of this document.

2018		Council Actions	
General Priority	Management Objective	June	October
1. Prevent Overfishing	1. Adopt conservative harvest levels for multi-species and single species fisheries and specify optimum yield.		Proposed Groundfish Specifications
	2. Continue to use the optimum yield caps for the BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries.		
	3. Provide for adaptive management by continuing to specify optimum yield as a range.		
2. Promote Sustainable Fisheries and Communities	6. Promote conservation while providing for optimum yield in terms of the greatest overall benefit to the nation with particular reference to food production, and sustainable opportunities for recreational, subsistence, and commercial fishing participants and fishing communities.	These considerations are applied to all management actions	AI Pacific cod set aside adjustment – Initial Review
	7. Promote management measures that, while meeting conservation objectives, are also designed to avoid significant disruption of existing social and economic structures		Sablefish discard allowance – Discussion paper
4. Manage Incidental Catch and Reduce Bycatch and Waste	14. Continue and improve current incidental catch and bycatch management program.	Obs Ann Rpt, OAC Rpt EM Workgroup Report Fixed gear CV rockfish retention Kuskokwim model review for 3-river index Halibut ABM O26 performance standard	2019 Observer Program Annual Deployment Plan – Review; FMAC, EMC Reports ADF&G Report on 3-river index

¹ http://legistar2.granicus.com/npfmc/meetings/2018/2/971_A_North_Pacific_Council_18-02-05_Meeting_Agenda.pdf

² <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/node/33552>

³ <https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/fmp/ProgWorkplan2018-02.pdf>

2018		Council Actions	
General Priority	Management Objective	June	October
4. Manage Incidental Catch and Reduce Bycatch and Waste	17. Continue program to reduce discards by developing management measures that encourage the use of gear and fishing techniques that reduce bycatch which includes economic discards.	Halibut retention in sablefish pots	Halibut retention in sablefish pots – Final Action
	19. Continue to account for bycatch mortality in total allowable catch accounting and improve the accuracy of mortality assessments for target, prohibited species catch, and noncommercial species.		2019 Observer Program Annual Deployment Plan – Review; FMAC, EMC Reports
	20. Control the bycatch of prohibited species through prohibited species catch limits or other appropriate measures.	GOA Tanner crab observer/effort data	ADF&G Report on 3-river index BSAI Halibut Abundance-based Management PSC Limits
	21. Reduce waste to biologically and socially acceptable levels.	Fixed gear CV rockfish retention Halibut retention in sablefish pots GOA pollock, cod seasons/allocations	2019 Observer Program Annual Deployment Plan – Review; FMAC, EMC Reports Halibut retention in sablefish pots
5. Reduce and Avoid Impacts to Seabirds and Marine Mammals	22. Continue to cooperate with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to protect ESA-listed species, and if appropriate and practicable, other seabird species.	Protection species report	Protection species report
7. Promote Equitable and Efficient Use of Fishery Resources	33. Provide for adaptive management by periodically evaluating the effectiveness of rationalization programs and the allocation of access rights based on performance.	BSAI Pcod trawl CV analysis Self-guided halibut rental boats	Unguided halibut rental boats
9. Improve Data Quality, Monitoring and Enforcement	38. Increase the utility of groundfish fishery observer data for the conservation and management of living marine resources.	EM Workshop Report Observer Annual Report ad OAC Report	2019 Observer Program Annual Deployment Plan – Review; FMAC, EMC Reports

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to review an initial draft of the **Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP). The Bering Sea FEP establishes a framework for the Council’s continued progress towards ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM) of the Bering Sea fisheries, and relies and builds on the Council’s existing processes, advisory groups, and management practice. This core FEP document identifies management goals and objectives for the FEP and for monitoring of the Bering Sea ecosystem and describes how the FEP framework will support research projects (Action Modules) to address Council priorities. The FEP offers a framework for strengthening trust, transparency, and a sense of shared investment among managers, scientists, and stakeholders.