

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) reviewed and discussed the Coastal Pelagic Species Science and Management Priorities Discussion Paper ([Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 1](#)). The CPSMT finds the list of topics in the paper as representative of CPS issues that have been important in recent years. In-season adaptive management of Pacific sardine that assigns catch to either the northern or southern subpopulation (NSP and SSP, respectively) in a timely and efficient process as discussed under Agenda Item G.3 may allow for increased opportunity and could be added to the list.

Priorities

The CPSMT suggests the highest near-term priority should be the reevaluation of Pacific sardine stock structure and the management unit(s) in the CPS Fishery Management Plan. Associated harvest control rule parameters, like Emsy, DISTRIBUTION, and FRACTION, should then be developed as a complete package.

The CPSMT has highlighted the importance of providing fishing opportunities for all sardine available to the U.S. commercial CPS fleet ([Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental CPSMT Report 1, November 2024](#)). Under the current management stock structure, a portion of the catch from Southern California is attributed post-season to NSP in the sardine stock assessment, while all catch of sardine is applied in-season to NSP in the annual catch limit.

The CPSMT recognizes the other topics listed in the paper as tasks that would benefit CPS management, but as lower priorities than addressing Pacific sardine stock structure. For example, the CPSMT agrees with the Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) in exploring alternative approaches for integrating periodic assessments and survey data for updating the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch, similar to what was developed for the central subpopulation of northern anchovy ([Agenda Item G.5, Supplemental SSC Report 1](#)).

Process

The CPSMT agrees that there is value in reviewing CPS science and management priorities on a biennial basis. This review would allow for consideration and adjustments to research and management tasks. To maximize efficiency, this can be done concurrent with the scheduled stock assessment prioritization process in November of even years. Discussions of both CPS management priorities and research, including stock assessment scheduling and capacity, can be facilitated at these meetings, as needed.