

1. Incidental Catch Limits for the 2024 Salmon Troll Fishery—Final Action
- E. Salmon Management
1. National Marine Fisheries Service Report
  2. Tentative Adoption of the 2024 Management Measures for Analysis
  3. Clarify Council Direction on 2024 Management Measures
  4. Methodology Review Preliminary Topic Selection
  5. Further Direction on 2024 Management Measures
  6. 2024 Management Measures—Final Action
- F. Groundfish Management
1. National Marine Fisheries Service Report Including a Take Reduction Team Overview
  2. Biennial Harvest Specifications for 2025–26 Fisheries—Final Preferred Alternatives
  3. Inseason Management—Final Action
  4. Sablefish Gear Switching—Final Action and Fishery Management Plan Amendment
  5. Preliminary Preferred Management Measure Alternatives for 2025–26 Fisheries
- G. Administrative Matters
1. Fiscal Matters
  2. Council Operations and Priorities
  3. Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures
  4. Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
- H. Cross Fishery Management Plan (FMP)
1. Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) Report
  2. U.S. Coast Guard Annual Report
- I. Coastal Pelagic Species Management
1. National Marine Fisheries Service Report
  2. 2024–25 Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP)—Final Action
  3. Pacific Sardine Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for 2024–25—Final Action
- Scientific and Statistical Committee 8 a.m.
- Groundfish Advisory Subpanel 1 p.m.
- Groundfish Management Team 1 p.m.
- Budget Committee 1 p.m.
- Enforcement Consultants 2 p.m.
- Day 2—Saturday, April 6, 2024*
- California State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Oregon State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Washington State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Groundfish Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Groundfish Management Team 8 a.m.
- Salmon Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.
- Enforcement Consultants As Necessary
- Day 3—Sunday, April 7, 2024*
- California State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Oregon State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Washington State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Groundfish Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Groundfish Management Team 8 a.m.
- Salmon Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.
- Enforcement Consultants As Necessary
- Day 4—Monday, April 8, 2024*
- California State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Oregon State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Washington State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team 8 a.m.
- Groundfish Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Groundfish Management Team 8 a.m.
- Salmon Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.
- Enforcement Consultants As Necessary
- Day 5—Tuesday, April 9, 2024*
- California State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Oregon State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Washington State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Groundfish Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Groundfish Management Team 8 a.m.
- Salmon Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.
- Enforcement Consultants As Necessary
- Day 6—Wednesday, April 10, 2024*
- California State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Oregon State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Washington State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Salmon Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.
- Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.
- Enforcement Consultants As Necessary
- Day 7—Thursday, April 11, 2024*
- California State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Oregon State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Washington State Delegation 7 a.m.
- Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.

#### Advisory Body Agendas

Advisory body agendas will include discussions of relevant issues that are on the Pacific Council agenda for this meeting and may also include issues that may be relevant to future Pacific Council meetings. Proposed advisory body agendas for this meeting will be available on the Pacific Council website, [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org), no later than Monday, March 25, 2024.

#### Schedule of Ancillary Meetings

*Day 1—Friday, April 5, 2024*

Salmon Advisory Subpanel 8 a.m.  
Salmon Technical Team 8 a.m.

those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt ([kris.kleinschmidt@noaa.gov](mailto:kris.kleinschmidt@noaa.gov); (503) 820-2412) at least 10 business days prior to the meeting date.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 15, 2024.

#### Rey Israel Marquez,

*Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2024-05877 Filed 3-19-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

#### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD782]

#### Fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of SEDAR 79 Assessment Webinar II for Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Mutton Snapper.

**SUMMARY:** The SEDAR 79 assessment process of Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic mutton snapper will consist of a Data Workshop, and a series of assessment webinars, and a Review Workshop. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**DATES:** The SEDAR 79 Assessment Webinar II will be held April 4, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Eastern Time. The established times may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the assessment process. Such adjustments may result in the meeting being extended from or completed prior to the time established by this notice.

#### ADDRESSES:

*Meeting address:* The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Those interested in participating should contact Julie A. Neer at SEDAR (see **FOR**

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to

**FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** below) to request an invitation providing webinar access information. Please request webinar invitations at least 24 hours in advance of each webinar.

*SEDAR address:* 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Julie A. Neer, SEDAR Coordinator; (843) 571-4366; email: [Julie.neer@safmc.net](mailto:Julie.neer@safmc.net).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a multi-step process including: (1) Data Workshop, (2) a series of assessment webinars, and (3) A Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a report that compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The assessment webinars produce a report that describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The product of the Review Workshop is an Assessment Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, HMS Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and NGO's; International experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and federal agencies.

The items of discussion during the webinar are as follows:

Panelists will review and discuss initial assessment modeling to date.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under

section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to each workshop.

*Note:* The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 15, 2024.

**Rey Israel Marquez,**

*Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. PTO-P-2023-0045]

#### Resources for Examining Means-Plus-Function and Step-Plus-Function Claim Limitations

**AGENCY:** United States Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) issued a memorandum to the patent examining corps to assist patent examiners in addressing means-plus-function and step-plus-function claim limitations, and to create a clearer record for the applicant, the public, and the courts. The issued memorandum will help ensure consistent analysis by USPTO employees in addressing means-plus-function and step-plus-function limitations and will result in clearer communications to applicants from the USPTO as to the interpretation of means-plus-function and step-plus-function limitations and any related deficiencies. Clearer USPTO communications provide both the applicant and the public with notice as to the claim interpretation used by the patent examiner during prosecution, and if the applicant intends a different claim interpretation, the issue can be clarified early in prosecution.

**DATES:** Comment Deadline: Written comments must be received on or before June 18, 2024, to ensure consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments must be submitted through the Federal

eRulemaking Portal at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). To submit comments via the portal, enter docket number PTO-P-2023-0045 on the homepage and select "Search." The site will provide a search results page listing all documents associated with this docket. Find a reference to this document and select the "Comment" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Adobe® portable document format (PDF) or Microsoft Word® format. Because comments will be made available for public inspection, information that the submitter does not desire to make public, such as an address or phone number, should not be included in the comments.

Visit the Federal eRulemaking Portal for additional instructions on providing comments via the portal. If electronic submission of comments is not feasible due to a lack of access to a computer and/or the internet, please contact the USPTO using the contact information below for special instructions.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carolyn Kosowski, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patents, at [Carolyn.Kosowski@uspto.gov](mailto:Carolyn.Kosowski@uspto.gov) or 571-272-7755; or Brannon Smith, Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patents, at [Brannon.Smith@uspto.gov](mailto:Brannon.Smith@uspto.gov) or 571-270-1601.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On March 18, 2024, the USPTO issued a memorandum to the patent examining corps titled "Resources for Examining Means-Plus-Function and Step-Plus-Function Claim Limitations (35 U.S.C. 112(f))" (memorandum). The memorandum is available at [www.uspto.gov/patents/laws/examination-policy/memoranda-examining-corps](http://www.uspto.gov/patents/laws/examination-policy/memoranda-examining-corps).

As background, means-plus-function limitations appear in many claims across a wide variety of technologies, while step-plus-function limitations appear less frequently. It is critical to proper examination that patent examiners appreciate the unique statutory construction of means-plus-function and step-plus-function limitations and make the record clear as to the same. It is also incumbent upon patent examiners to make the prosecution history record clear for applicants, the public, and the courts (and for the USPTO for any post-grant determinations) when claims are examined under a means-plus-function