

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
Sept 29 - Oct 2, 2025 Webinar

C5 Motion –BSAI Groundfish Specs and BSRE AMs

The AP recommends the Council adopt the proposed 2026 and 2027 BSAI groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC and set TACs, with all proposed specifications consisting of rollovers of 2026 final specifications from 2025/2026 harvest specifications. The TACs for both BS and AI Pacific cod have been adjusted to account for the State water GHL fisheries. The TACs for sablefish have also been reduced in the BSAI by 5% to accommodate the GHL fishery.

The AP recommends the Council adopt the proposed flatfish ABC reserves, 2026 and 2027 annual and seasonal PSC limits and apportionments in the BSAI as provided in Tables 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. The Proposed 2026 and 2027 Prohibited Species Bycatch Allowances in Table 10 account for the Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program.

The AP recommends the Council adopt the proposed 2026 and 2027 halibut discard mortality rates (DMRs) for the BSAI as shown in Table 12. Tables 1, and 7- 12 can also be found in the meeting agenda under C3.

The AP recommends the council consider a Revised Discussion paper on the BSAI BSRE Accountability Measures.

Motion passes 20-0

Rationale in Support of Motion

- *Specific to Agenda Item C5b (Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Groundfish Specs): The AP appreciates the work by Council Staff, Groundfish Plan Team, and Survey Crew.*
- *Specific to Agenda Item C5c (Spatial Apportionment Process): The AP appreciates the staff's efforts to improve communication about the TAC setting process and Final Specification Tables.*
 - *Although staff recommended removing the BRD column from the Final Specifications Tables, discussion highlighted that BRD data remains useful in the Final Specs, even if listed separately from the ABC column.*
- *Specific to Agenda Item C5d (BS/RE Accountability Measures): The AP appreciates receiving the BSAI BSRE Accountability Measures Discussion Paper, however it did not fully incorporate all six of the Council's requests, making it inadequate for decision-making at this time. A revised BS/RE discussion paper in Fall 2026, addressing deficiencies and including a full BS/RE stock assessment, is responsive to written and oral public comment and will give policy makers a full picture of the issue before deciding whether and how to select any AMs. Additional notes included:*

- *Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea surveys have continued to show stock growth for BS/RE, yet ABCs have only modestly increased.*
- *Current stock status for BS/RE should be central to evaluating whether new AMs are warranted and the paper places most emphasis on data and decisions from 10-15 years ago. It would be helpful to have SSC guidance on whether AM's are actually still warranted given the current stock structure.*
- *Another sizable gap in the current discussion paper is the absence of direct industry consultation during the paper's development. There are substantial avoidance measures to reduce BS/RE catch that have been ongoing within the fleet for more than a decade and continue into this year. This is important context in understanding this issue and the great lengths that the fleet is undergoing to avoid it.*