

INSEASON MANAGEMENT RESPONSE POLICY

In recent years, inseason groundfish management has become a dominant feature of many Council meetings. The complexities of the management regime, including new mandates and strictures imposed with rebuilding plans and new monitoring systems, has translated into somewhat unpredictable outcomes when management adjustments are made. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT), Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP), and the Council have consequently devoted such a large amount of time to consideration of inseason management adjustments, that there has been concern about the impact to some of the other important tasks on their agendas. Additionally, some of these adjustments, especially early in the fishing season, have resulted in early attainment of a species' optimum yield (OY) or fishery harvest guideline, which has caused hardship as fisheries closed prior to the normal end of the season. Therefore, the Council has scheduled consideration of an inseason management response policy to more efficiently and effectively manage Council meetings and the groundfish fishery.

Last November, the GMT recommended that management measures not be liberalized as part of any inseason action prior to the June Council meeting (unless data or model errors warrant such consideration). It was thought that early attainment problems may be lessened if inseason actions were more conservative during the first six months of the fishing season. The Groundfish Information Policy Committee (GIPC) met on January 25-26 to discuss and recommend, among other things, an inseason management response policy to help govern future Council actions (Agenda Item F.1.b, Attachment 1). The GIPC agreed with the GMT that this would be a sound policy for the Council to consider. Another inseason management response policy alternative the GIPC considered was limiting the magnitude of inseason adjustments. For instance, inseason adjustments, such as trip limits, could be limited to $\pm 10\%$ of status quo under this alternative. The GIPC rejected this alternative because it seemed to be unnecessarily complicated and was obviated by their recommendation to not liberalize management measures during the first six months of the fishing season.

The Council task under this agenda item is to consider the recommendations of the GIPC and other Council advisors and adopt inseason management response alternatives or a draft policy for public review. Final action on an inseason management response policy will be scheduled for the April Council meeting.

Council Action:

1. Adopt Inseason Management Response Alternatives/Draft Policy for Public Review.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.1.b, Attachment 1: Draft Summary Minutes of the January 25-26, 2005 Groundfish Information Policy Committee Meeting.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Ad Hoc Groundfish Information Policy Committee (GIPC) Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Adopt Inseason Management Response Alternatives/Draft Policy for Public Review

John DeVore
Don Hansen

PFMC
02/22/05

DRAFT SUMMARY MINUTES
Ad Hoc Groundfish Information Policy Committee

Pacific Fishery Management Council
Embassy Suites Portland Airport Hotel
Cedars I and II Rooms
7900 NE 82nd Avenue
Portland, OR 97220
503-460-3000
January 25-26, 2005

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2005

Members Present:

Mr. Don Hansen, Dana Wharf Sportfishing, Pacific Fishery Management Council Chairman
Dr. Elizabeth Clarke, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Ms. Marija Vojkovich, California Department of Fish and Game
Dr. Patty Burke, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. Phil Anderson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Dr. Steve Freese, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Region
Ms. Eileen Cooney, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration General Counsel

Others Present:

Dr. Don McIsaac, Pacific Fishery Management Council
Mr. Dan Waldeck, Pacific Whiting Conservation Cooperative
Mr. Rod Moore, West Coast Seafood Processors Association
Dr. Jim Hastie, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Mr. Steve Bodnar, Coos Bay Trawlers Association, Bandon Submarine Cable Committee
Mr. Pete Leipzig, Fishermen's Marketing Association
Ms. Michele Culver, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. Brian Culver, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. Dan Wolford, Coastside Fishing Club
Mr. Brad Pettinger, Oregon Trawl Commission
Ms. Gway Kirchner, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Dr. Ed Waters, Pacific Fishery Management Council
Mr. John DeVore, Pacific Fishery Management Council

A. Call to Order and Administrative Matters

1. Roll Call, Introductions, Announcements, etc.

Chairman, Don Hansen, called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

2. Review of Committee's Charge

Dr. McIsaac reviewed the three-day Groundfish Information Policy Committee (GIPC) and Allocation Committee agendas. The priorities for the GIPC at this meeting are agenda items B, C, and D. If these discussions run long, the GIPC could take up agenda item E at a later date.

3. Approve Agenda.

Dr. McIsaac reviewed the draft agenda. A motion to approve the agenda was made, seconded, and passed by members of the GIPC.

B. Mid-Term OY Adjustments Policy

1. Current Status of Fishery Management Plans (FMP) Provisions

The FMP currently allows the ability to reduce optimum yields (OYs) during a biennial management period. The Council, however, intended to allow both upward and downward OY adjustments if new stock assessments indicate this is scientifically sound. Ms. Cooney said the Council record was ambiguous as to what was intended. An FMP amendment is necessary to allow consideration of upward OY adjustments midway through a management cycle. While a formal FMP amendment process may not be needed, some process is required. Dr. Freese said the Council announced their intent in September. The next step is to draft a letter with the correct amendatory language (from Amendment 17) and bring back before the Council for their approval. Council-approved amendatory language would then be transmitted to NMFS to solicit final Secretarial approval. Dr. McIsaac asked if the triggers and other mechanisms for adjusting OYs need to be in the FMP? Does this need to be specified in the FMP amendment process? Ms. Cooney said if more changes are desired than have been developed so far, a more formal FMP amendment process would be required. To raise OYs for 2006, a formal emergency type rule via a NEPA process with notice and comment would be required. Theoretically, the public notice and comment can be waived in an emergency, but an OY change affects rebuilding plans and other legal mandates.

2. NEPA and Rulemaking Considerations

- a. Schedule
- b. Emergency Exception for 2005-2006?

3. Review the History of Past Assessments and Management Responses

4. Policy Considerations

- a. Trigger Thresholds (Percentage of Change, Species' Applications)
- b. Management Reaction

Dr. McIsaac asked Dr. Clarke when new assessments would be available for Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Council consideration. Dr. Clarke reviewed the Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel schedule. She explained the schedule was designed to be in synchrony with the March, June, and September Council meetings. There are two contingency STAR Panels set up for late September and early October, if any of the assessments encounter problems. These assessments would then be theoretically available for the November meeting. One potential problem is getting the assessments reviewed during the week of May 16-20 into the June briefing book. She also reported a change in one of the assessments. The vermilion rockfish assessment has been upgraded from a data report to a full assessment because old catch data has recently surfaced. This does not pose a problem in the review process since the

vermillion rockfish assessment has already been scheduled for a STAR Panel. She also mentioned that other species' assessments may have data problems and might be downgraded to data reports if they are not recommended by a STAR Panel.

Dr. McIsaac explained the issue here is how to deal with a major change in the status of any of these stocks. These assessments are designed to affect management in 2007 and 2008, but the Council may need to react sooner (i.e., change OYs and management measures for the 2006 fishery) if there is a dramatic change. Mr. Anderson briefly reviewed the recent history of bocaccio assessments as an example of why we need a policy to adjust OYs mid-term. Ms. Cooney said the Council should initiate action on changing OYs and management measures as soon as the science is validated and approved through the process. Mr. Anderson suggested the SSC and other advisors could review assessments in June and September and wait until November for Council consideration and approval. The November meeting is when the Council is scheduled to adopt a range of acceptable biological catches (ABCs)/OYs. He reiterated that a mid-term OY adjustment should be a very rare event. Ms. Cooney said that if the Council wants to consider an OY change, the process should start as early as possible. This is required to allow proper notice and comment for rulemaking. Dr. Burke asked how that could be done if the assessment has not been formally approved by the Council? Is it final science prior to Council adoption? Ms. Cooney said the science may be considered final after STAR Panel and SSC reviews indicate the assessment is the best available for management decision-making. Dr. Clarke said the laws we have in place seem not to be able to accommodate a multi-year management process. Dr. McIsaac said recommending how and when information enters into the Council process is the GIPC's charge. Mr. Anderson thought it would be important to demonstrate via a risk assessment that status quo management for one additional year (i.e., the second year in a biennial management cycle) will not jeopardize stock rebuilding. Mr. DeVore mentioned the SSC is developing an analytical tool to evaluate progress towards achieving rebuilding targets. The Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analyses should include some sort of risk assessment. This will be in place before the June Council meeting. Dr. Hastie remarked that a rebuilding analysis cannot be conducted until after the stock assessment is finalized. This will delay any process to change an OY mid-term in the cycle. Mr. Anderson envisioned the use of Dr. Andre Punt's rebuilding population simulation program to evaluate whether a rebuilding plan is compromised by leaving a status quo OY in place for the last year in a management cycle.

The GIPC addressed the timing of policy development. Can a policy be put in place by November 2005? Ms. Cooney said the process for formalizing a policy depends on the nature and magnitude of an OY adjustment. A full NEPA process is needed if an FMP amendment is contemplated to formalize a policy that allows both upward and downward OY adjustments. Otherwise, there are two different types of emergency rules: those that address non-compliance with the FMP, and those addressing non-compliance with the specified rulemaking. Mr. DeVore asked if a threshold or trigger mechanism needs to be described in the FMP? Ms. Cooney said that would help the NEPA process, but would not change the rulemaking requirements. Dr. McIsaac asked how the process would be affected if a trigger was tripped before the FMP was amended? Ms. Cooney said regardless of an FMP amendment, there would still need to be a NEPA process and notice and comment rulemaking to change the OY. Dr. Freese said a normal emergency rule requires an EA and notice and comment rulemaking. This takes a minimum of two months. If the change affects an approved rebuilding plan, then there are additional complications. Ms. Vojkovich said stock assessments are designed to project future recruitment

and biomass. Therefore, projections shouldn't be applied to the current management period. She couldn't see how a new stock assessment would affect a current OY based on an existing stock assessment. Ms. Cooney stated an OY change may be required if new information indicates a rebuilding plan is in jeopardy. Dr. Freese remarked the pertinent question to ask is, what is the damage that would be caused by waiting a year to adjust an OY? He said this will depend on the species and whether or not there is an existing rebuilding plan. Ms. Cooney said, in an extreme situation, it will be difficult to sit on an OY for another year without a management change.

Ms. Vojkovich explained the 2004 California Recreational Fishery Survey (CRFS) estimates will be available by the March briefing book deadline (February 16). How do we consider adjustments indicated by that data? Mr. DeVore explained the 2005-2006 Specifications and Management Measures Environmental Impact Statement contemplated the delivery of these new data in 2005. Inseason adjustments of seasons, bag limits, retention rules, or size limits are considered routine and can be done in one Council meeting. However, a mid-term OY adjustment is not a routine change and may be difficult to implement quickly. Dr. Burke observed a complicated trigger mechanism requires a complicated response. She emphasized we do not have the resources to constantly do this.

Mr. DeVore explained the process for considering new information as the "best available science". The best available science with respect to stock assessments is determined by a STAR Panel and ultimately the SSC. For the Council to enact a mid-term OY adjustment policy, they need to establish the thresholds or triggers for making such an adjustment. Mr. Anderson noted the Council will be hard pressed not to respond if a new stock assessment suggests current management would jeopardize a rebuilding plan. The GIPC then discussed the frequency of future assessments for overfished species. Dr. Clarke said the plan is to assess all the overfished species every two years in time for deciding management measures for each upcoming biennial management cycle. Assessments for non-overfished species will occur less frequently. It may be difficult to cull the number of assessments to a reasonable level, which was the experience this last year when they tried to limit the number of assessments to 23. Assessment authors may also conduct independent assessments from time to time. Mr. DeVore said any considered policy needs to contemplate what to do if a new assessment indicates there is a new overfished species. Dr. Freese recommended the GIPC determine a list of questions they would like to see answered before considering an OY adjustment. Ms. Cooney agreed,, but added there needs to be at least a two-meeting process if analysis indicates an OY change is necessary. Mr. Moore asked Ms. Cooney if pessimistic scientific results are available in June, is there legal constraints to not changing the OY mid-term? Could the Council respond by adopting more conservative management measures? Ms. Cooney said she wanted to confer with others to explore the legal ramifications of such an action. She said she would consult with some folks in Washington D.C. over the lunch break. Dr. Burke asked if it was realistic to expect all the new stock assessments would be approved by September? Mr. DeVore said this might occur, but some of the critical rebuilding analyses (i.e., rebuilding analyses for canary and yelloweye rockfish) will not be available before November.

Mr. Anderson shared his strawman concept: if a fully reviewed stock assessment of a species that is currently classified as overfished recommends a reduction of the OY in the next biennial cycle, the Council will consider more conservative management measures and/or a more conservative OY if the assessment indicates the absence of a reduction in the second year of a biennial cycle

causes the rebuilding probability to decrease or if it extends the rebuilding time frame. There was some thought that this policy, without more defined thresholds, would create a hair trigger mechanism. Regardless, the rebuilding analysis would provide the analytical basis for this mechanism. Dr. Burke said another criterion should be the resources that can be applied to pursue all these potential problems given the current Council workload. Mr. DeVore asked if rulemaking can include the contingency management measures that would be responsive to an OY change? Ms. Cooney said probably not.

Mr. DeVore reviewed the history of West Coast groundfish stock assessments and the management responses to these assessments. This historical perspective might be useful in considering a mid-term OY adjustment policy and the species-specific triggers or thresholds that might prompt an OY adjustment. The recent history of bocaccio and canary stock assessments provide vivid examples of highly variable assessments that dramatically affect management. Other examples of highly variable assessments include yellowtail rockfish and sablefish.

After the lunch break, Ms. Cooney said her feedback from NOAA General Counsel was that changing management measures in lieu of reducing the OY would not be legally sufficient. Emergency rulemaking would be required. Dr. McIsaac asked if raising an OY could be considered as a response to an economic emergency? Ms. Cooney said raising OYs mid-term would be a much more difficult process and probably could not be done with an emergency rulemaking. Dr. McIsaac recommended considering a few hypothetical situations to test some policy options. Dr. Hastie said these situations tend to be complex and highly variable. It will be difficult to find a policy that fits a “standard” situation. Dr. Freese asked what types of changes in a stock assessment indicate a biological problem? Dr. Clarke said the most important elements of a stock assessment have to do with assumptions laid over the data, which affect how we think the species is doing compared to what is observed. The largest changes in an assessment tend to occur due to changes in model assumptions or parameters such as initial, unfished biomass (B_0), catchability (q), mean generation time, etc. She ventured that maybe we need to construct rules regarding which assessments should be updates vs. which should be full assessments. Mr. Anderson asked if we are legally constrained to react quickly to a new stock assessment designed to affect the following biennial management cycle? Ms. Cooney reiterated there is risk if not changing the OY affects the ability to achieve an adopted rebuilding plan. Dr. Burke concluded we then need to have a policy since it’s clear that we have to act. Mr. Anderson recommended the GIPC define legal limits on when we need to act, and then move in a little from that. These sideboards could then be used as hard policies to trigger when an OY adjustment would occur. Ms. Vojkovich asked what about a case of a species that is newly discovered to be overfished? Ms. Cooney remarked we would have a year to develop a rebuilding plan in that case, so there is no need to act immediately. Mr. DeVore said the SSC will be working on an analytical tool for evaluating rebuilding plan progress. This tool and a developed protocol should answer Mr. Anderson’s concern.

After considerable discussion, the GIPC recommended mid-term OY adjustments be considered only for overfished species and only in a downward direction if it is needed to achieve the adopted rebuilding plan. They also recommended the triggers be developed on a case by case basis according to the SSC rebuilding plan review protocols.

C. Inseason Management Adjustments Policy

1. Consider The GMT Recommendation for Conservative Actions During the First Six Months of the Season

The GMT recommendation was in reaction to the problem of early attainment of darkblotched rockfish encountered in the trawl fishery last year. A remedial policy recommendation forwarded by the GMT last November was to not liberalize commercial management measures in the first six months of the fishing season unless an error or data problem warrants such consideration. The GIPC supported this recommendation to not liberalize management measures until the June Council meeting at the earliest.

2. Expected CRFS Data Delivery and Management Implications

Ms. Vojkovich said 2004 CRFS estimates will be available for the March briefing book deadline. They will characterize the confidence in different sampling modes. They do not expect to have the information to calibrate 2004 CRFS estimates with past Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) estimates until June at the earliest and more likely September. The RecFIN Statistical Committee will explore this calibration step. Their next meeting is in March, which obviates the expected June or September delivery of results. There has been a delay in reconciling the apparently aberrant 2003 recreational catch estimates. They would like to look at some of the random digit dialing data used to derive the MRFSS effort estimates and report their initial analyses in March. They do not expect to use CRFS to recommend inseason adjustments in March.

Dr. McIsaac asked about the significance of the calibration step. The projection model cannot be updated with new CRFS data until it is calibrated with the historical MRFSS data. Dr. Hastie expressed concern about assessments for southern stocks relying on a RecCPUE index. It was explained this index is not affected since it is sampled catch relative to sampled effort. However, models for stocks with significant recreational removals could be somewhat compromised.

Ms. Vojkovich thought 2006 management decision-making (inseason adjustments) will be fully informed by CRFS data. The calibration methodology should be developed by then.

Ms. Culver explained there is a commitment by GMT members to provide monthly catch estimates to track harvest relative to harvest guidelines. Ms. Vojkovich said those CRFS estimates will be available monthly. The distribution of catch by time can be determined from the old MRFSS-based model, but the inseason estimates will be from CRFS.

3. Consideration of Moderating the Magnitude of Adjustments (i.e., $\pm 10\%$ Adjustment)

The GIPC did not feel this was a good policy, especially given the recommendation under C.1.

D. Update on Observer Data Reports Available in 2005

Dr. Clarke provided an update on anticipated observer data reports this year. In February a limited entry trawl report incorporating data through August 2004 will be available. These data will be used to update the bycatch model in April. There will also be a limited entry fixed gear report available in February for use at the March Council meeting. Additionally, there will be observer data available for the California halibut fishery. This was requested by the GMT to evaluate the exempt trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) bounds in California. An open access near shore report will be available in May and incorporated in a new bycatch model by the June Council meeting. An updated limited entry trawl observer data report with data through April 2005 will be available in August with a model update at the November Council meeting. After that, all limited entry and open access (all open access) data reports will be delivered in August of each year for November decision-making. Ms. Culver asked if data reports and bycatch models could be reviewed by the GMT prior to Council meetings could be accommodated. The new open access model will be a simple one not requiring SSC review. Ms. Vojkovich asked about data standards for releasing observer data reports? Dr. Clarke said there are no explicit standards, but the decision to publish a report is based on Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFS) review of the data. These data need to be representative of the fleet. This is the de facto standard. NWFS is currently meeting their goal of fleet-wide observer rates. Data inputs for the trawl bycatch model will be stratified by selective vs. no selective trawl gears shoreward of the RCA. The limited entry fixed gear sablefish observer data report will always be reported through October, the end of the primary season. These data have to be stratified this way due to the tier limit structure of the fishery. Mr. Leipzig asked if there is an open access/limited entry stratification in the California halibut data report? Dr. Hastie said he has only looked at the limited entry portion of that fishery so far. Dr. Clarke said she recommends this stratification. The California halibut data report in March will be limited entry only. The open access portion will be reported in May.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2005

Members Present:

Mr. Don Hansen, Dana Wharf Sportfishing, Pacific Fishery Management Council Chairman
Dr. Elizabeth Clarke, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Ms. Marija Vojkovich, California Department of Fish and Game
Ms. Cyreis Schmitt, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Dr. Patty Burke's designee)
Mr. Phil Anderson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Dr. Steve Freese, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Region
Ms. Eileen Cooney, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration General Counsel

Others Present:

Dr. Don McIsaac, Pacific Fishery Management Council
Mr. Dan Waldeck, Pacific Whiting Conservation Cooperative
Mr. Rod Moore, West Coast Seafood Processors Association
Dr. Jim Hastie, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Mr. Steve Bodnar, Coos Bay Trawlers Association, Bandon Submarine Cable Committee
Mr. Pete Leipzig, Fishermen's Marketing Association
Mr. Steve Joner, Makah Tribe
Ms. Michele Culver, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Mr. Brian Culver, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. Dan Wolford, Coastside Fishing Club
Mr. Brad Pettinger, Oregon Trawl Commission
Ms. Gway Kirchner, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. Mike Burner, Pacific Fishery Management Council
Dr. Kit Dahl, Pacific Fishery Management Council
Dr. Ed Waters, Pacific Fishery Management Council
Mr. John DeVore, Pacific Fishery Management Council

E. Develop a Policy for Data and Models Used in Biennial Management Decision-Making

1. Procedures for Considering New Data and Models
 - a. Data and Models Originating Outside the Council Process
 - b. SSC and GMT Review Protocols
2. Establish a Deadline for Considering New Data and Models

Mr. DeVore stated the GIPC's charge under this agenda item was to recommend a policy that allowed outside data and models to be rigorously reviewed in the process while creating a deadline for these reviews and timely adoption of new best available science. He said any new models that are adopted after the first meeting when deciding biennial specifications and management measures (i.e., the November 2005 meeting is the first one in the process to decide 2007-2008 management measures) severely encumbers the process. Dr. Clarke briefly explained the latest any NMFS data and models would come into the process would be at the November Council meeting. These data and models would be assessments that are reviewed in the late September and early October wrap-up STAR panels. This was considered responsive to the Council's timeline for decision-making. Dr. McIsaac asked Dr. Clarke if all the NMFS assessment scientists are aware of the Council's timeline. Dr. Clarke said yes, but she has learned that there are new assessments not contemplated by the Council that are being developed, or at least considered. The problem is these unsolicited assessments could be introduced into the Council process as public comment. Dr. Clarke also has made contact with the greater scientific community (i.e., academia) to invite them into the process, educate them on the process and the data used in contemplated assessments to prevent new information coming in that might compromise an assessment or the process. This alternative invites the greater community to instead contribute to the established assessment process. As an example, Mr. Hansen brought up the Franke and Butler acoustic surveys which are being done experimentally. Dr. Clarke explained they are working on this to overcome technical problems with this new technique. She assured the Committee this experimental survey will undergo a thorough peer review before it will be an official survey used in an assessment. She did not expect this survey would be used in this year's cowcod assessment.

Mr. Anderson recommended we discuss a policy broad enough to encompass all the different models used in Council decision-making or consider different policies for different models. He mentioned the established review protocols for assessment (i.e., STAR Panels and the SSC). Would there ever be a separate process for reviewing "outside" assessments? What would be the timeline for considering these assessments? Should the recommendation for assessment scientists accepting outside data be in November a year prior to the Council meeting when the range of biennial ABCs/OYs is decided. Dr. Clarke said it could be difficult to force scientists to accept outside data. She said that data could be considered by June prior to the year that

assessments are done. Therefore, June 2004 would be the deadline for considering assessments used for decision-making for the 2007-2008 period. It is noted the Council made their final decision on the proposed list of assessments in April 2004. However, there is still a problem with some NMFS scientists continuing to do assessments not formally recommended by the SSC and adopted by the Council. Ms. Vojkovich said state scientists could aid NMFS scientists in filling assessment data gaps. Mr. Anderson said if an outside assessment for a species already on the adopted list is proposed, it makes sense to have those individuals attend the scheduled data workshops and STAR Panels where that species' assessment is addressed. However, how do we deal with outside assessments not on the adopted species list? It needs the same rigorous review, but we don't have the resources to add new STAR Panels. Dr. Clarke said we could make such assessments a top priority for the next round. Mr. Anderson said it should not necessarily be a top priority, but included on the list of proposed assessments for the next round. The GIPC was in agreement with that recommendation.

Mr. Wolford explained the Coastside Fishing Club's recreational catch estimation model. It was really set up as a challenge to the old MRFSS estimation model. However, catch monitoring and estimation can be instrumental in an assessment that tracks species' removals. Dr. Clarke said the final decision on data inputs in an assessment is made by the assessment author. New data is solicited at a data workshop where it is discussed by assessment scientists, but ultimately decided to be used or not by the assessment author. However, such data sources could be dismissed by a STAR Panel or the SSC. Data sources contemplated in an assessment are now being advertised on the NWFSC and Council web sites. Dr. Clarke recommended the STAR Terms of Reference should require assessment authors to list the data sources considered with the reasons for accepting or rejecting these data sources.

Mr. Anderson then recommended the GIPC discuss protocols for non-assessment models considered in the process. Dr. Clarke said any new model reviews needs to fit into the SSC's schedule. For instance, the SSC held a workshop on the RecCPUE index considered for assessments. There were also workshops set up in the past to consider new models. Additionally, outside the Council process we have NMFS reviewing PacFIN data and other such review mechanisms that influence decision-making. Ms. Schmitt asked what constitutes a new model? What new indices in an assessment make an assessment model "new"? Such things are discussed and decided at data workshops set up by the SSC and the NWFSC.

Dr. McIsaac explained how items get on the SSC's agenda. The Council decides the agenda priorities on Friday of each meeting. Therefore, the SSC agenda is set at previous Council meetings. The public does not walk into the SSC and demand to get on the agenda. He recommended the GIPC explore Mr. Wolford's case as being a fruitful way to explore review protocols. Mr. Anderson suggested the first stop for new model reviews should be at the data workshops. If the new model has merit, the SSC could recommend a separate workshop to review a potentially useful new model. Dr. McIsaac explained how the new Coastside recreational catch estimation model was first brought to the GMT in November 2003 to react to a Council agenda item on California recreational fishery adjustments. The GMT recommended an SSC review, but the SSC agenda was too crowded to consider this review then. The Coastside model was subsequently brought to the RecFIN Data Committee. Mr. Anderson's proposed solution to start with a data workshop appeared to be a good protocol for such initial reviews. Ms. Vojkovich said the state could also be a review gatekeeper for contemplated models. For instance, the Coastside model will be reviewed by CDFG staff this year. Dr. Freese asked if

there was a standard format for data considered in an assessment? Dr. Clarke said this is done and decided at the data workshops. Dr. Freese suggested the SSC should develop a standard format. Mr. Anderson was not in favor of establishing an expedited review process. It should be rigorous and deliberate. Dr. Freese explained he was not recommending an expedited review, but a standard protocol for early filtering of considered data.

Mr. DeVore suggested the GIPC discuss and recommend an ultimate deadline for the Council considering new data and models. He suggested the November meeting when biennial specifications decision-making is initiated should be considered as an ultimate deadline. Ms. Vojkovich was concerned that new projection models (i.e., recreational projections using CRFS data) may not be worked out by this November. Ms. Culver explained that data collection methodology for recreational catch monitoring is reviewed by the RecFIN Data Committee and then the SSC. After these data are recommended, the GMT considers models that use these data. These are sequential, yet separate, processes. Deadlines should be considered for both processes. Mr. Wolford asked if the best pathway is to go through the state reviews and then to the GMT? Ms. Culver said the GMT protocol is to only use data recommended by the official review bodies. Ms. Schmitt agreed with the recommendations, but cautioned that the ODFW may not have the resources or expertise to scientifically review new data and models. Mr. DeVore recommended the GIPC consider a deadline for new models. The November kick-off meeting for biennial specification decision-making is recommended so analyses can be done in time for the Council to decide a range of management measures the following April. The GIPC was in agreement that the November kick-off meeting should be the deadline for considering new models. Data feeds informing these models could be considered after the November meeting. Mr. Anderson recommended this flexibility and suggested new data should be brought to the GMT's attention by their February meeting.

Ms. Vojkovich asked about the process and schedule for deciding the STAR Terms of Reference? She has a laundry list of recommendations. It was explained the STAR Terms of Reference has been finalized for the current suite of assessments. This process is done in the science off year (even years under the current management regime). Dr. Clarke recommended the final STAR Terms of Reference be decided by the April meeting during the science off year and, therefore available prior to the data workshop(s). Therefore, the next STAR Terms of Reference should be decided in April 2006. The GIPC agreed with this recommendation.

Ms. Culver suggested draft models need to go before the GMT and/or SSC prior to November so that a final decision can be made in November. Should the SSC review recreational projection models? Currently, recreational catch estimation models are reviewed by the RecFIN Data Committee and recreational catch projection models are reviewed by the GMT. Dr. McIsaac recommended the GMT has the expertise to do this. Only if there is GMT disagreement on a catch projection model should it be reviewed by the SSC. Dr. Clarke said there should then be a placeholder for this review on the September SSC agenda. Mr. Anderson did not like this idea. He suggested GMT disagreement should be brought to the Council and a policy call could then be made. If the GMT suggested an SSC review, this recommendation should be brought to the Council. The Council could then task the SSC. Ms. Culver advocated new projection models should be brought to the GMT in June. Then the SSC could review new models in September if needed. The GIPC agreed with this recommendation.

(360) 697-5393 Dr. Freese asked if there should be a protocol for data brought into the process from industry or outside advocates. Such data includes economic data and EFH data. Dr. Clarke said there is a peer-review protocol for such data. She cautioned the Council should not interfere with this process.

The meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.

ADJOURN

Summary of GIPC Recommendations

Mid-Term OY Adjustments Policy

- Mid-term OY adjustments should only be considered for overfished species and only in a downward direction if it is needed to achieve the adopted rebuilding plan.
- Triggers for adjusting OYs should be developed on a case by case basis according to the SSC rebuilding plan review protocols, which will be adopted during the March and April Council meetings.

Inseason Management Adjustments Policy

- Management measures should not be liberalized until the June Council meeting at the earliest unless data or model errors warrant earlier consideration.

Policy for Data and Models Used in Biennial Management Decision-Making

- Models originating from outside the NMFS and Council process should have the same rigorous review as agency models. The SSC will be the final arbitrating review body for considered new models.
- New models should not be accepted after the initial November meeting when biennial management decision-making is initiated. However, data feeds informing an adopted model can occur after then.
- The stock assessments and STAR Terms of Reference for reviewing these stock assessments designed for management decision-making should be decided by the April meeting of the next science “off year”. That is, stock assessments for the 2009-2010 biennial management cycle should be decided by the April 2006 Council meeting.

PFMC
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