

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the reports of three of the four off-year workshops held during 2006. The report of the harvest policy workshop was reviewed by the SSC during the March Council meeting. The SSC notes that the off-year workshops provide a means for developing a common approach to dealing with specific assessment-related problems and that the benefits of these workshops will be maximized if their recommendations are provided to all assessment authors and Stock Assessment and Review (STAR) Panel participants

The SSC notes that a committee of independent experts (CIE) reviewer attended the bottom trawl survey workshop. However, the report from this reviewer was not available to the SSC.

The NWFSC Bottom Trawl Survey workshop considered how best to use the results from the “expanded” shelf-slope survey during the 2007 round of stock assessments. The SSC endorses the recommendation from the workshop that the “expanded” shelf-slope survey should either be treated as a new index or used to extend the current slope survey index. The SSC notes that the data from the triennial and “expanded” surveys can be combined, but this would require adequate support from the analyses. The SSC also agreed with the workshop recommendation that assessment updates should not use the data from the “expanded” survey if they are to be reviewed as assessment updates. However, this means that there will be no new information on trends in abundance for widow rockfish and English sole.

The SSC supports the recommendation from the Data/ Modeling workshop that the approach used to represent stock status in assessment reports should be modified, and members of the SSC Groundfish Subcommittee will work with the developer of SS2 to implement this. The SSC notes that although it was anticipated that deadlines would be set for when data are to be received for the 2007 stock assessments, no actual dates have been set; such dates should be set for the 2009 round of groundfish assessments. Finally, the SSC supports the recommendation from the Data/Modeling workshop that a single “best” catch series by species and state should be constructed. This is particularly important for rockfish species.

The SSC endorses the conclusion of the Pre-Recruit Survey workshop that it is possible to combine the data from 2001-06 from the RV David Starr Jordan and the FV Excalibur, and that the earlier SWFSC data should not be used in stock assessments, except in those for species found predominantly in the “core” area surveyed by the SWFSC. The SSC supports assessment authors critically evaluating alternative assumptions for how pre-recruit data should be included in stock assessments, but notes that only a few assessments will be able to make use of pre-recruit data for the 2007 round of stock assessments.