



CALIFORNIA WETFISH PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Representing California's Historic Fishery

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May 21, 2008

Mr. Don Hansen, Chair &
Dr. Don McIsaac, Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place #200
Portland OR 97220-1384

RE: Agenda Item C.3.c : Research and Data Needs pertaining to Chapter 4 CPS FMP and
Chapter 7 EBM Fishery Management

Dear Chairman Hansen, Dr. McIsaac and Council members,

Again for the record, the California Wetfish Producers Association (CWPA) represents the majority of sardine/wetfish processors and active wetfish fishermen from both Monterey and southern California. We very much appreciate this opportunity, once again, to address the Council on subjects of importance to our wetfish industry.

Another recommendation in our October 13, 2007 comments:

[2] We ask the Council to join with the CPS industry in sending a strong message to the Secretary of Commerce and NOAA Fisheries in Washington DC, urging appropriation of sufficient funding to accomplish not only the CalCOFI synoptic cruise planned in April 2008, but also a second synoptic cruise timed for late June-July, the peak spawning period in the Pacific Northwest, to measure the extent of spawning in the Northwest as well as S.CA, then incorporate data from the full extent of the spawning range into the 2008 stock assessment.

As a second element of this request for expanded field research: we believe developing a second index of abundance is essential to provide a more accurate, more stable picture of the resource. CWPA would be happy to cooperate with the SW Fisheries Science Center and SW Region to expand knowledge of the sardine resource in California.

We thank NOAA Fisheries and the SW Fisheries Science Center for their significant efforts to secure adequate funding and ship time to conduct the two synoptic sardine CPS research cruises planned in 2008, the first of which ran in April coastwide and the second is scheduled for July. We appreciate the SW Center's ongoing commitment to Pacific sardine research.

CWPA members and California's wetfish industry also support the CPS Advisory Subpanel statement on Research and Data Needs, recommending that the Council rank as a high

research priority for sardine the development of collaborative aerial spotter and acoustic survey methodology, now sponsored by the Pacific Northwest sardine industry. We thank the PNW sardine industry for their efforts to develop a science-based second index of abundance. As we commented last October, we believe development of a second measurement of abundance in addition to daily egg production, a highly variable index, is essential to provide a robust picture of the resource. CWPA is pleased to cooperate in this research effort, as well as with the SW Fisheries Science Center, to expand knowledge of the sardine resource coast-wide. CWPA members have volunteered to monitor California sardine landings during directed sardine fishing periods and cease targeting sardine in time to reserve a portion of the directed fishery HG for research, intended for point sets to quantify aerial observations, testing the feasibility of this aerial/acoustic method to provide a second independent assessment of the sardine resource.

Regarding Chapter 7 – EBM Management Research Needs, Section 7.1.1 Climate and ocean status and trends, 7.1.2 Trophic interactions and 7.1.3 Highest Priority Issues:

We urge the Council to include as a highest priority increased measurements of and research on the effects of ocean acidification on marine resources. Ocean acidification, the 'other CO₂ problem, may precipitate serious consequences for numerous marine organisms over the near term, in particular calcifiers at the bottom of the food web. Attached for your information is an abstract from a 2007 NOAA research cruise that measured undersaturated [acidified] water throughout the water column from 50 m to the beach in northern CA, a condition not anticipated until at least 2050.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment. We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and look forward to working with the Council to develop management measures for the sardine resource that heed the lessons of the past and acknowledge the vital importance of wetfish generally, and sardine specifically, to California's historic wetfish industry.

Sincerely,



Diane Pleschner-Steele
Executive Director

Attachments:

Abstract – Feeley et al ocean acidification research findings

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EVIDENCE FOR UPWELLING OF CORROSIVE 'OCEAN ACIDIFIED' WATER ONTO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF

During a cruise in May-June 2007 onboard the RV *Wecoma*, we observed 'ocean acidified' water that is corrosive to calcifying organisms upwelling onto the continental shelf of western North America from Queen Charlotte Sound, Canada to San Gregorio Baja California Sur, Mexico. The ocean uptake of anthropogenic CO₂ has shoaled the aragonite saturation horizon so that seasonal upwelling exposes significant portions of the shelf to waters that are undersaturated with respect to aragonite. The corrosive waters reached mid-shelf depths of ~ 40-120 m along most transect lines, and reached all the way to the surface on two transects off northern California. In the region of the strongest upwelling, the isolines of $\Omega_{arag} = 1.0$, DIC = 2190 and pH = 7.75 closely followed the 26.2 potential density surface. This density surface shoaled from a depth of ~175 m in the offshore waters and breached the surface over the shelf near the 100 m bottom contour, ~ 40 km from the coast. These results indicate that the upwelling process caused the entire water column shoreward of the 50 m bottom contour to become undersaturated with respect to aragonite, a condition that was not predicted to occur in surface waters until 2050. While little is known about how these seasonal processes might impact the development of calcifying organisms or the finfish that populate this region, results from laboratory studies show that many species are highly sensitive to changes of this magnitude.

<http://www.pmel.noaa.gov/co2/>

Oral presentation

Presentation is given by student: No

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Time: 13:45

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