

STOCK ASSESSMENT PLANNING FOR 2011-2012 GROUND FISH FISHERY
DECISION MAKING

In March, the Council adopted for public review a preliminary list of groundfish stocks to be assessed next year (Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1), which will be used to decide the harvest specifications and management measures for 2011 and 2012 groundfish fisheries. There are currently eight full assessments preliminarily planned to be conducted in the next cycle and, with five stock assessment review (STAR) panels scheduled and a recommended limit of two full assessments reviewed at each STAR panel, there may be capacity to add two full assessments. The Council initially considered new assessments for the minor rockfish complexes and for species where data are particularly sparse. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) noted that new methods for assessing data-poor species and species complexes may need to be developed. Therefore, the Council recommended that the SSC and other scientists develop these methods, as well as review protocols, so that new types of assessments for data-poor species and species complexes can be considered in 2011 to inform management decisions for 2013 and 2014 fisheries. Dr. Elizabeth Clarke will discuss the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) perspective on the list of stock assessments in Agenda Item F.2.b, Attachment 1.

The Council also adopted for public review a draft terms of reference for the groundfish stock assessment and review process for 2009-2010 as recommended by the SSC, with the deletion of one paragraph regarding the number of STAR panel reviewers shown in strikethrough (Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 2). Since March, members of the SSC and the Northwest Fisheries Science Center reviewed this terms of reference and offer their recommendations in Attachment 1 (suggested additions are underscored and deletions are in a strikethrough format).

A draft terms of reference for groundfish rebuilding analysis was also adopted in March. Members of the SSC have worked on updating this terms of reference since the March meeting to more accurately reflect the types of rebuilding analyses required since consideration of Amendment 16-4 rebuilding plans (Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 3).

The Council is tasked at this meeting with final adoption of a list of groundfish stocks to be assessed next year, including full and updated assessments; providing guidance on a schedule of STAR panels to review new full assessments (the SSC will review updated assessments); final adoption of a Stock Assessment and Review Process Terms of Reference for 2009-2010; and final adoption of a Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis Terms of Reference. The Council should consider advice from the NMFS science centers, advisory bodies, and the public before making these decisions.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt a Final List of Stocks To Be Assessed in 2009.**
- 2. Provide Guidance on a Final 2009 Stock Assessment Review Schedule.**
- 3. Adopt a Final Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment and Review Process for 2009-2010.**
- 4. Adopt a Final Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1: Table 1. Council Proposed Schedule for West Coast Groundfish Assessments in 2009.
2. Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 2: Draft Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment and Review Process for 2009-2010.
3. Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 3: Draft SSC Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Stock Assessment Options
- c. Scientific and Statistical Committee Report
- d. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- e. Public Comment
- f. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Terms of Reference, Stock Assessments, and Assessment Schedule for 2009

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PFMC
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