

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON PACIFIC MACKEREL  
MANAGEMENT FOR 2008-2009

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) received a presentation on the 2008 Pacific mackerel stock assessment by Dr. Emmanis Dorval. In addition, Dr. Tom Helser briefed the SSC on the results of an assessment review that was sponsored by the Council on May 13, 2008, in Long Beach, CA. The review was conducted by two members of the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) sub-committee of the SSC, and several members of the CPS Management Team.

The last full assessment of Pacific Mackerel occurred during May 2007 and the current assessment was prepared as an update assessment. The SSC considers that the assessment has satisfied the Terms of Reference for a CPS Stock Assessment update because (a) the base model that was selected and approved at the 2007 Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel formed the basis for the update assessment, (b) this assessment used the same model structure and estimation framework (ASAP) as the last full assessment, and (c) only updates to the data used during the 2007 full assessment were included in the updated assessment. The updated assessment included revised catch landings, catch-at-age and weight-at-age data for 2006-07, and new 2007-08 data. The assessment was based on three indices of abundance (California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations [CalCOFI], commercial passenger fishing vessel [CPFV] and spotter). Only one of the indices of abundance (CPFV) was updated to include data for 2007-08. The CPFV index is now the primary index of abundance for Pacific mackerel, but is based on fishery-dependent sampling and is therefore subject to the concerns associated with such data. In addition, the CPFV index may not reflect trends in abundance for the southern portion of the range.

Dr. Dorval indicated that the stock assessment team (STAT) intends to continue to investigate an SS2-based Pacific mackerel assessment. If completed, an SS2-based assessment should be reviewed at a May 2009 STAR Panel. The SSC also notes that the ASAP model has been updated and that some of its new features may be useful for the Pacific mackerel assessment. Should the work on SS2 modelling for Pacific mackerel prove problematic, the updated ASAP model should be considered as a possible alternative modelling platform.

The SSC endorses the update assessment as the best available science and its use in Council management decisions. Based on the Council's harvest control rule, the acceptable biological catch (ABC) and maximum allowable harvest guideline for Pacific mackerel from the update assessment is 51,772 mt.

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6/9/08