STOCK ASSESSMENT REVIEW (STAR) PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR 2009

Full assessments for Pacific sardine and Pacific mackerel typically occur every third year, necessitating a three-year cycle for the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Stock Assessment Review (STAR) process. The last full assessments occurred in 2007. Because CPS populations are so dynamic and because work to improve the Pacific mackerel and Pacific sardine assessments continues, the Council recommended the next set of full assessments be convened in 2009 rather than 2010 as previously planned.

If entirely new, structurally changed or significantly revised assessments are developed in a full assessment, a STAR Panel must be convened to review the assessment prior to its use for setting harvest guidelines. Full stock assessment reports are developed and distributed following each STAR Panel review. Updated assessments are conducted during interim years and involve a less formal review process.

The Council and NMFS have been working on methods to improve the assessment of Pacific mackerel. New modeling efforts were a major focus during the 2007 STAR Process, but unresolved technical issues led the Council to recommend no changes to Pacific mackerel assessment methodology. In 2008, the Northwest Pacific sardine industry conducted a pilot program using aerial survey methods for Pacific sardine and NMFS completed two coastwide research cruises that were focused, in part, on CPS.

To help guide and coordinate stock assessment authors and reviewers, a draft of the revised Terms of Reference for a Coastal Pelagic Species Stock Assessment Review Process (Agenda Item G.1.b, Attachment 1) has been completed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and has been reviewed by the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) and the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS).

The Council is scheduled to review and approve a public review draft of the CPS Terms of Reference at its November 2008 meeting. Following a public review period, the Council will consider adopting a final draft for use in the 2009 CPS STAR process at the March 2009 Council meeting in Seattle, Washington. The Council may also discuss and provide guidance on the STAR panel schedule for 2009, including plans for full assessments of Pacific mackerel and Pacific sardine, as well as a potential review of new survey methodologies.

Council Action:

Adopt Terms of Reference for Coastal Pelagic Species STAR Panels for Public Review and Provide Guidance on the 2009 Assessment Schedule.

Reference Materials:

3. Agenda Item G.1.c, CPSMT Report.
Agenda Order:

a. Agenda Item Overview  Mike Burner
b. SSC Report  Steve Ralston
c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
d. Public Comment
e. Council Action:  Adopt Terms of Reference for Coastal Pelagic Species STAR Panels for Public Review

PFMC
10/16/08