

STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND REBUILDING ANALYSES FOR 2011-2012 GROUND FISH FISHERIES

The Council process for setting groundfish harvest levels and other specifications depends on periodic assessments of the status of groundfish stocks and a report from an established assessment review body or, in the Council parlance, a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviews this information and makes a recommendation relative to the standards of 1) the best available science, and 2) the soundness of the scientific information relative to use in groundfish fishery management decision-making by the Council. The Council then approves the new assessments and relevant analyses, such as rebuilding analyses for overfished species, for use in setting groundfish harvest levels and other specifications for the following biennial management period.

At their September meeting, the Council adopted the last of the candidate stock assessments. However, for petrale sole, the Council requested further analysis of two biological biomass reference points: (1) the biomass estimated to result in maximum sustainable yield (i.e., B_{MSY}) as a potential target biomass for managing the stock, and (2) the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) or biomass threshold for declaring the stock overfished. This request was in the context of three alternatives: (1) the current groundfish proxy reference points of B40% as the B_{MSY} target and B25% as the overfished threshold (MSST), (2) the data-driven B_{MSY} estimate from the stock assessment of 19 percent of virgin biomass (i.e., B19%) and a minimum stock size threshold of half that amount (B9.5%), as allowed under the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan, and (3) a new proxy biomass target of B25% for petrale sole and other flatfish species and a proxy minimum stock size threshold of B15% for Council-managed flatfish species, as recommended in the SSC statement at the September Council meeting. The SSC has done the requested analysis and will present their recommendations under this agenda item. The Council should adopt a target biomass level and a minimum stock size threshold for managing petrale sole.

Draft rebuilding analyses for seven overfished rockfish species and petrale sole were reviewed at the “mop-up” STAR panel meeting on September 30 - October 1. Draft rebuilding analyses for these eight species are provided in Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachments 1-8. The Council should consider the new rebuilding analyses, as well as the advice of the SSC in deciding whether or not to adopt the new rebuilding analyses for use in 2011-2012 groundfish management.

Council Action:

- 1. Consider approving new biomass reference points for petrale sole.**
- 2. Approve rebuilding analyses recommended by the SSC.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 1: Draft Bocaccio Rebuilding Analysis for 2009.

2. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 2: Rebuilding Analysis for Canary Rockfish Based on the 2009 Updated Stock Assessment.
3. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 3: Draft Cowcod Rebuilding Analysis.
4. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 4: 2009 Darkblotched Rockfish Rebuilding Analysis.
5. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 5: Draft Rebuilding Update for Pacific Ocean Perch in 2009.
6. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 6: Draft: Rebuilding Analysis for Widow Rockfish in 2009.
7. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 7: Rebuilding Analysis for Yelloweye Rockfish Based on the 2009 Stock Assessment.
8. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 8: 2009 Petrale Sole Rebuilding Analysis.
9. Agenda Item G.2.d, Public Comments.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview John DeVore
- b. Scientific and Statistical Committee Report Steve Ralston
- c. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Adopt Petrale Sole Reference Points and Overfished Species Rebuilding Plans

PFMC
10/15/09