

GROUNDFISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON SURPLUS CARRYOVER

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) was provided guidance and preliminary information from Ms. Sarah Towne, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) West Coast Region (WCR), regarding eligible surplus carryover quota pounds (QP) for the 2015 Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program. The 2015 data have not been finalized (will be complete in April); however, it is likely that the projected 2016 catch estimates (both with and without surplus carryover) will remain relatively unchanged unless new information regarding projected 2016 catch develops. The Council can recommend, for each individual species or species complex, that NMFS: a) issue carryover up to 10 percent, b) issue carryover at some level lower than 10 percent (i.e., reduce the eligible carryover percent), or c) forego carryover.

Consistent with NMFS' policies and case law, the GMT conducted quantitative analysis to inform decision-making on the question of whether to issue carryover for all IFQ species where the annual catch limit (ACL) is less than acceptable biological catch (ABC). The GMT previously discussed the larger issue of carryover, including the basis for allowing eligible sablefish surplus carryover and discussions regarding long-term solutions to carryover provisions and meaning of exceeding ACLs relative to exceeding overfishing limit (OFLs). The GMT notes that this annual evaluation of carryover does not meet the biological rationale and management incentives around which the carryover program was originally designed. Currently, development of a long-term, simplified solution, which also meets the legal obligations, is on the omnibus list but has not been scheduled (Agenda Item I.3, Attachment 3, March 2016).

Table 1 shows the estimated surplus carryover amount available for 2016 (as of February 25, 2016), catch in 2015 (as of March 4, 2016), percent of IFQ allocation attained in 2015, and whether the ABC is equal to the ACL (i.e., is the species eligible for carryover). Species that are in grey are not eligible for carryover because the ABC=ACL.

Table 1: Shorebased IFQ Program Carryover IFQ Species and Estimates.

IFQ Species	Surplus Carryover Estimate a/	2015 Catch b/	Percent Attainment of 2015 IFQ Allocation	2016 ABC ACL Note (NE Lawsuit)*
Arrowtooth flounder	480,340	3,681,062	52%	ABC=ACL
Bocaccio rockfish South of 40°10' N.	13,755	85,223	43%	ABC>ACL
Canary rockfish	6,701	98,842	95%	ABC>ACL
Chilipepper rockfish South of 40°10' N.	241,152	416,972	16%	ABC=ACL
Cowcod South of 40°10' N.	271	832	25%	ABC>ACL
Darkblotched rockfish	55,380	269,762	39%	ABC>ACL
Dover sole	9,302,124	13,753,175	13%	ABC>ACL
English sole	1,401,183	725,327	4%	ABC=ACL
Lingcod North of 40°10' N.	215,430	408,590	16%	ABC=ACL
Lingcod South of 40°10' N.	84,485	69,851	7%	ABC=ACL
Longspine thornyheads North of 34°27' N.	556,534	1,693,928	24%	NA
Minor shelf rockfish North of 40°10' N.	225,387	73,704	3%	ABC>ACL
Minor shelf rockfish South of 40°10' N.	37,983	19,672	5%	ABC>ACL
Minor slope rockfish North of 40°10' N.	249,684	502,772	19%	ABC=ACL
Minor slope rockfish South of 40°10' N.	80,763	153,212	16%	ABC>ACL
Other flatfish	1,318,425	1,838,194	11%	ABC=ACL
Pacific cod	181,987	831,541	33%	ABC>ACL
Pacific halibut (IBQ) North of 40°10' N.	14,483	79,062	38%	NA
Pacific ocean perch North of 40°10' N.	24,327	109,926	39%	ABC>ACL
Petrable sole	42,098	5,510,339	98%	ABC=ACL
Sablefish North of 36° N.	142,280	4,857,784	96%	NA
Sablefish South of 36° N.	154,324	374,474	22%	NA
Shortspine thornyheads North of 34°27' N.	269,201	1,583,625	42%	NA
Shortspine thornyheads South of 34°27' N.	9,262	1,793	1%	NA
Splitnose rockfish South of 40°10' N.	341,720	61,642	2%	ABC=ACL
Starry flounder	162,979	14,144	1%	ABC=ACL
Widow rockfish	281,855	1,795,880	54%	ABC>ACL
Yelloweye rockfish	174	78	3%	ABC>ACL
Yellowtail rockfish North of 40°10' N.	793,007	3,196,481	32%	ABC=ACL

a/ Estimates based on February 25, 2016, DRAFT

b/ Generated from NOAA West Coast Groundfish IFQ Application on March 4, 2016, still considered DRAFT

All non-whiting IFQ species where the ACL is less than the ABC (except for sablefish north of 36° N. lat. and canary rockfish) have attainment rates lower than 60 percent for 2015, and therefore the probability is low that they will reach their respective trawl allocations or ACLs in 2016 (based on performance in 2011 through 2014). **Therefore, the GMT recommends**

issuance of up to 10 percent carryover for all non-whiting IFQ species where the ACL is less than the ABC, except for sablefish north of 36° N. lat. and canary rockfish; recommendations on those two species are discussed below.

Sablefish North of 36° N. Lat.

Sablefish north of 36° N. lat. (sablefish north) is consistently a highly attained species and therefore the decision regarding carryover is explored here. Table 2 shows the GMT’s best estimates of sablefish mortality north for 2015, compared to each of the sector allocations, set-asides, and the ACL. Attainment of the 2015 ACL (4,793 mt) for sablefish north is currently estimated at 95 percent (4,542 mt).

Table 2: 2015 Sablefish north of 36° N. Lat. Landings, Allocations, and Percent Attainment.

Sector	Catch Estimate (mt)	Allocations (mt)	Attainment (%)
EFP a/	0	1	0%
Tribal b/	449	479	94%
Research c/	26	26	100%
Recreational d/	2	6.1	28%
LE DTL e/	194	244	80%
LE Primary e/	1,298	1,385	94%
OA DTL e/	447	402	111%
Shorebased IFQ f/	2,114	2,199	96%
At-Sea Whiting g/	11.79	50	24%
Totals	4,542	4,792.1	95%

a/ Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Final Estimate from NMFS

b/ Allocation includes 1.6% discard mortality reduction

c/ Estimates not Final, allocation amount used

d/ Data complete through 12/31.

e/ Limited entry fixed gear (LE) daily trip limit (DTL) fishery: 90% complete through October 31 for CA, Dec 31 for WA and OR; assumes 16.6% observed discard rate with 20% discard mortality

f/ Draft as of 2/25/15, excludes carryover

g/ 90% complete through 11/22; includes inseason discard

Table 3 shows 2015 total catch estimates, allocations, total available metric tons including eligible surplus, and corresponding attainment rates used to inform 2016 IFQ projections for sablefish north. Attainment of the 2015 IFQ allocation (not including surplus carryover from 2014 to 2015) for sablefish north is currently estimated at 96 percent. Note that 90 mt surplus carryover was allowed for sablefish north from 2014 to 2015, and catch did not exceed the total available pounds for IFQ in 2015. Total attainment of total available pounds was 96 percent (including surplus carryover).

Table 3: 2015 Shorebased IFQ Program allocation and landings with and without surplus carryover.

Species Area/ Category	Excluding 2015 Surplus Carryover (pounds that rolled from 2014 into 2015 vessel accounts)			Surplus Carryover Issued in 2015 (lbs)	Including 2015 Surplus Carryover (pounds that rolled from 2014 into 2015 vessel accounts)			Eligible Surplus Carryover 2016 (lbs) c/
	2015 Allocation (lbs)	2015 Catch (lbs) a/	2015 Attainment (lbs)		2015 Total Available (lbs)	2015 Total Catch (lbs) b/	2015 Attainment of Total Available (lbs)	
Sablefish North of 36° N.	4,848,781	4,660,084	96%	198,725	5,047,506	4,858,490	96%	142,280
Sablefish South of 36° N.	1,587,064	326,249	21%	137,010	1,724,074	374,474	22%	154,324

a/ Excluding catch of surplus carryover pounds issued in 2015 (tracked separately)

b/ Including catch of surplus carryover pounds issued in 2015

c/ Eligible surplus carryover is calculated per regulations at 50 CFR 660.140(e)(5), and is based on used and unused quota pounds in 2015 vessel accounts. NMFS provided an estimated surplus carryover amount for this meeting based on the 2015 catch and balance data as of 2/25/16, but the 2015 data is not yet final.

For coastwide projections to be compared against the coastwide OFL, sablefish south of 36° N. lat. (sablefish south) is also included. Table 4 shows a summary of GMT projections for all-sectors' attainment of the sablefish N. ACL and the coastwide sablefish OFL in 2016 under two scenarios: full issuance of eligible surplus carryover, and zero carryover from 2015 to 2016. Sablefish south is assumed to have full eligible carryover issued, since attainment was low in 2015.

Table 4: Projections for 2016 of sablefish compared to coastwide OFL.

Amount of Carryover Issued	2016 Sum/Coastwide Projected Mortality	2016 OFL	% 2016 OFL
All eligible for Sablefish N.; all eligible for Sablefish S.	5,739	8,526	67%
Zero for Sablefish N.; all eligible for Sablefish S.	5,677		67%

With issuance of carryover, the GMT's best estimate for attainment of the 2016 sablefish north ACL is 96 percent; without issuance of eligible surplus carryover for sablefish N. the projection decreases to 95 percent of the ACL. Additionally, the GMT's best estimate for harvest relative to the coastwide OFL is 67 percent with and without carryover. The GMT acknowledges there are many variables that could influence projected attainment of the Shorebased IFQ Program allocations and the ACLs (for example market conditions, weather, etc.), and that there is uncertainty in the estimates. Our projections for 2016 make the assumption that each sector has

the same attainment level as in 2015; for the Shorebased IFQ Program, this includes surplus carryover. **Therefore, the GMT recommends issuance of up to 10 percent carryover for sablefish north of 36° N. lat. for 2016, where eligible.**

Canary Rockfish

In 2015, 95 percent of the IFQ allocation (including carryover) is predicted to be attained. From 2011 to 2014 though, the average attainment of canary in the IFQ sector was 22 percent. The high attainment of canary rockfish in 2015 was partially due to the lightning strike tow of canary rockfish by the *F/V Seeker*. However, the 2015 ACL was only 86 percent attained (based on current best available information) and based on preliminary data for 2016, **the GMT recommends issuance of up to 10 percent carryover for canary rockfish for 2016, where eligible.**

Recommendations

1. **The GMT recommends issuance of up to 10 percent carryover for all non-whiting IFQ species where the ACL is less than the ABC, including sablefish north of 36° N. lat. and canary rockfish, where eligible.**

PFMC
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