

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF 2016
FISHERIES AND SUMMARY OF 2017 STOCK ABUNDANCE FORECASTS

2016 Review of Ocean Salmon Fisheries

Dr. Robert Kope (Northwest Fisheries Science Center) discussed the *Review of 2016 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* with the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The report includes sections on status determination criteria in Chapters II and III for Chinook and coho salmon stocks, respectively. Klamath River Fall Chinook and Queets and Skagit coho salmon stocks are approaching an overfished condition. In addition, several Chinook salmon stocks failed to meet escapement goals, while recent escapement estimates for many coho stocks were unavailable. Although 2016 exploitation rate estimates are not yet available for any stock and 2015 exploitation rate estimates are only available for two stocks, the most recent exploitation rate estimate for most stocks were below their maximum fishing mortality thresholds (MFMT). However, the most recent exploitation rate estimate for Hood Canal coho (from 2014) exceeded its MFMT, meaning that Hood Canal coho were subject to overfishing in 2014. Table II-5 contains the performance of Chinook salmon stocks relative to 2016 preseason conservation objectives while Table II-6 contains Chinook salmon stock status relative to overfished and overfishing criteria. There were no Chinook salmon stocks classified as overfished. Tables III-6 and III-7 contain this same information for coho salmon stocks. There were no coho salmon stocks classified as overfished.

2017 Stock Abundance Forecasts

Dr. Kope discussed Chinook and coho salmon stock abundance forecasts for 2017 in *Preseason Report I*. The SSC endorses the 2017 forecasts, acceptable biological catches, and overfishing limits in *Preseason Report I* as the best available science for use in 2017 salmon management.

Considerations Regarding Recent Environmental and Biological Conditions in 2016-2017

The California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment team described ocean conditions as generally unfavorable to salmon. Environmental conditions are incorporated into forecasts for some stocks, but not all. While mechanisms are not in place to quantitatively incorporate such considerations into the forecasts for all stocks in 2017, caution is warranted in setting harvest levels and management measures.

Dr. Kope and the SSC note that the variability of escapements has increased over the past decade, making them more difficult to forecast. As a result of this increasing variability, forecast errors may be larger.