

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
UPDATE ON REGULATORY MATTERS AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Mr. Mark Helvey briefed the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) regarding the draft of a resolution intended for consideration by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) regarding the *Framework for a Precautionary Management Approach for North Pacific Albacore* (Agenda Item E.1.b, Supplemental NMFS Report 4). The resolution tasks the IATTC scientific staff to work with the International Scientific Committee's Albacore Working Group to develop a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE). The MSE will analyze the effects of harvest control rules under a range of reference points and evaluate the degree to which each scenario would meet performance criteria.

The SSC notes that the resolution does not mention the operating model to be used in the MSE. The operating model represents the population being managed and is one of the most important and time consuming aspects of developing an MSE. The SSC recommends the resolution describe the process by which the operating model will be developed and reviewed, including who will perform each of these tasks.

The current suite of reference points and control rules is quite prescriptive. The SSC notes that the result of an MSE with these particular reference points and control rules may fail to produce a system that satisfies the performance criteria. In addition, some of the proposed target fishing mortality reference points may be incompatible with the limit biomass reference point with which they are paired. The MSE may identify other strategies that better satisfy the performance criteria than those originally proposed.