

METHODOLOGY PRELIMINARY TOPIC SELECTION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Terms of Reference (TOR) for Methodology Reviews adopted in early 2012 describes a procedure for considering new methodologies related to the assessment and management of coastal pelagic species (CPS) and groundfish. Although the TOR focuses on methodologies that are useful components for stock assessments, it can be used to consider other methods such as economic analyses and ecosystem-based fishery management.

For CPS topics, the TOR process calls for a 1-2 page proposal to be submitted by the methodology proponent, submitted for the briefing book of the "appropriate Council meeting." In recent years, this has occurred at November Council meetings. The proposal should include the title, the names of the principals, a statement of how the proposed methodology will improve assessment and management for the stocks in question, and an outline of the field and analytical methods. The proposal is reviewed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee, Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT), and Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS), and the Council. If the Council approves the review of the proposed methodology, Council and NMFS staff will schedule a methodology review panel meeting, with the appropriate independent experts, plus a representative each from the CPSMT and the CPSAS. The panel will then submit a report its findings, for Council consideration.

At this meeting, one new methodology has been proposed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California Wetfish Producers Association (Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 1), to establish an index of abundance for sardines in nearshore waters off southern California. If the proposal were endorsed by the Council, the timing of any review would be problematic for any results to be used in the next stock assessment under the new fishing year regime, as it is scheduled for Council adoption at the April 2014 Council meeting. However, should the Council endorse a review of this methodology and approve it by the June 2014 Council meeting, it may be useful for the next summer field season.

The proposed survey methodology arrives in the context of the February 2013 Pacific Sardine Harvest Parameters Workshop, which sought to address new information regarding the relationship between temperature and sardine productivity. The technical report that analyzes the potential change in temperature indices (from the Scripps Pier temperature index to the CalCOFI temperature index) will be considered by the Council at its March 2014 meeting.

Since the Council has adopted a new fishing year and stock assessment delivery timing, the Council may wish to formalize a new CPS methodology review process. Notably, the Council has scheduled consideration of a new groundfish methodology review process for the March 2014 Council meeting, with intent to see if it can mirror some of the salmon methodology review process successful features. As a possible aid in discussing guidance for the CPS methodology review process, Council staff has prepared a draft Council Operating Procedure that might be useful in assignments to the CPSMT and CPSAS for further consideration at a future meeting (Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 2).

At this meeting, the Council will consider one methodology proposal, and will consider the process for proposing and conducting methodology reviews.

Council Action:

1. Consider topics for review.
2. Consider a CPS methodology review process for this and future management cycles.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 1: *California Department of Fish and Wildlife/California Wetfish Producers Association proposal for Southern California Bight Aerial Survey.*
2. Agenda Item E.4.a, Attachment 2: Draft Council Operating Procedure 24.
3. Agenda Item E.4.c, Attachment 3, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
 - b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - c. Public Comment
 - d. **Council Action:** Consider Methodology Topics for Review and Provide Guidance on a Methodology Review Process
- Kerry Griffin

PFMC
10/11/13