

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON BIENNIAL MANAGEMENT
SPECIFICATIONS FOR 2013-2014 GROUND FISH FISHERIES—PART 1

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed Table 1 of Agenda Item E.4 Attachment 1, which provides overfishing limits (OFLs) for bocaccio, darkblotched rockfish and widow rockfish. Assessments for these stocks were reviewed by Groundfish Subcommittee of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and were endorsed by the full SSC at this meeting. Overfishing limits for bocaccio, darkblotched rockfish and widow rockfish are based the 50 percent spawning biomass per recruit (SPR) rate, which is considered a proxy for F_{MSY} . The SSC recommends adoption of the OFLs for bocaccio, darkblotched rockfish, and widow rockfish in Table 1. The SSC also recommends adoption of the adjusted OFL for canary rockfish in Table 1.

To set acceptable biological catch (ABCs) for these species, SSC again recommends use of the P* approach, in which the buffer between the OFL and the ABC is determined by the value of sigma, representing scientific uncertainty and established by the SSC, and the Council's choice of a P* to express its policy decision on acceptable risk. For all stocks except widow rockfish, the default value of sigma (0.36) for category 1 stocks was considered appropriate. For widow rockfish, the SSC recommends a larger value of sigma (0.41) derived from the base model and low state of nature in the widow rockfish decision table. This approach is intended to better represent uncertainty in stock-recruit steepness, which is considered the major source of uncertainty in the widow rockfish assessment. The resulting buffers for the Council's P* choice are given in Table 2 (Agenda Item E.4 Attachment 2).

Two other issues were discussed by the SSC related to OFLs for groundfish. First, it was brought to the SSC's attention that the yelloweye rockfish assessment does not estimate relative year class strength. Based on the criteria established for the stock categories, yelloweye rockfish should therefore be considered in category 2 rather than category 1, and the sigma for category 2 should be used to set the ABC. Second, based on SSC recommendations at the September 2011 meeting, the OFL for the Other Fish complex in Table 1 is the sum of OFLs only for those species with OFL estimates. Species in the complex without OFLs were assumed not to contribute to the OFL for the complex. OFLs could potentially be developed for additional species in the Other Fish complex, but this may require restructuring the complex to include species that are not currently in the complex, such as additional skate species.