

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON FISHERY MANAGEMENT
PLAN AMENDMENT 13, ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS AND ACCOUNTABILITY
MEASURES

Mr. Mike Burner presented an overview of the issues addressed in Draft Amendment 13 to the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan (Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1) with emphasis on items that the Council may want the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to address. Dr. Kevin Hill presented the CPS Management Team (CPSMT) analysis comparing the performance of current control rules for Pacific sardine and Pacific mackerel with the new National Standard 1 (NS1) benchmarks – overfishing limits (OFLs), acceptable biological catches (ABCs), annual catch limits (ACLs), and annual catch targets (ACTs) (Agenda Item F.2.a Attachment 1).

In drafting the Amendment, the CPSMT and Council Staff considered:

1. OFLs, ABCs, ACLs, and ACTs for the actively managed species (P. sardine and P. mackerel);
2. OFLs and ABCs for the monitored species;
3. possible additions to and removals from the monitored species and prohibited harvest species group; and
4. species to be categorized as Ecosystem Component Species (ECS).

With respect to (4), above, the CPSMT wrestled with the pros and cons of being all-inclusive in constructing the ECS list or limiting it to species taken in the various CPS fisheries. The CPSMT opted for the more parsimonious approach of adding species to the ECS list only if caught in substantial quantities with CPS gear. The SSC concurs with the CPSMT decision.

In March 2010, the SSC reviewed preliminary CPSMT work on OFLs and ABCs for Pacific sardine and made a number of suggestions for additional analysis that might clarify the performance of the current sardine harvest control rule (HCR) relative to the new NS1 guidelines. These additional analyses were conducted by the CPSMT and presented to the SSC at this meeting. The new work made clear how the current HCR performs compared to the application of OFL buffers designed to reflect scientific uncertainty. Based on the results, the CPSMT suggested three alternatives for the actively managed CPS. The SSC recommends that Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative as it best captures the intent of the new NS1 guidelines and is most consistent with other Council FMPs.

For the monitored species, either Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 can be used to achieve any desired ratio ABC/OFL, but Alternative 1 is conceptually simpler and more consistent with the ABC determination used in other Council FMPs. Alternative 1 should be regarded as $ABC = OFL * BUFFER$ with $BUFFER = 0.25$ serving as the best current value for BUFFER. This value may be updated as additional analyses become available.

The SSC does not have specific recommendations on the draft FMP language at this time, but will work with Council staff to capture the intent of Council final action.

Finally, the SSC discussed the concept of formally including biological, ecological, economic, and social factors into the CPS FMP that could be used as optimal yield considerations in determining the appropriable ACLs for CPS. The potential factors are numerous and their relative weighting might be difficult to establish, but there may be some benefit to presenting them for Council consideration. The SSC sees some merit in formally considering such factors but suggests that the Council's newly-formed Ecosystem Plan Development Team may be in a better position to evaluate the numerous ecological and socio-economic factors that may be best incorporated into the Council's ACL considerations.

PFMC
06/14/10