

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
PACIFIC MACKEREL HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES  
FOR 2014-2015

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed a report prepared by the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (Agenda Item G.2.b, NMFS Report). The report provides a set of catch-only biomass projection estimates for Pacific mackerel for the purpose of deriving harvest specifications for the fishing year that begins July 1, 2014 and ends June 30, 2015.

All of the biomass projections use the same base model and other parameters in the most recent 2011 full assessment; however, they differ in their assumptions of recent recruitment. The default projection derives recruitments directly from the Beverton-Holt Spawner-Recruit curve. Three additional projections, requested by the SSC Coastal Pelagic Species subcommittee, were also reported to examine sensitivity.

The SSC discussed the biomass projections provided in the report and also reviewed the Spawner-Recruit relationship and the pattern of historical and recent recruitments as reported in the 2011 full assessment. The SSC notes that there is evidence of auto-correlation in the historical recruitment time series, which could potentially cause a bias in the default biomass projection. For this reason, the SSC concludes that using the biomass projection derived from the mean of 2008-2010 recruitment deviations (in lieu of the default projection) is a risk-neutral approach to obtain harvest specifications. This results in a biomass estimate of 157,106 mt.

The SSC recommends an overfishing limit of 32,992 mt. Since Pacific mackerel is a short-lived stock and the most recent full assessment is dated, the SSC recommends carrying forward the Category 2 sigma classification (0.72) for deriving harvest specifications in 2014-2015.