

STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND REBUILDING ANALYSES

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) process for setting groundfish harvest levels and other specifications depends on periodic assessments of the status of groundfish stocks and a report from an established assessment review body or, in the Council parlance, a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviews this information and makes a recommendation relative to the standards of 1) the best available science, and 2) soundness for use in groundfish fishery management decision-making by the Council. The Council then approves the new assessments and relevant analyses used to set groundfish harvest levels and other specifications for the following biennial management period.

The Council requested further review of three data-moderate assessments for nearshore rockfish to consider alternative area stratifications. Specifically, the Council requested the assessments for brown and copper rockfish be limited to south of the California-Oregon border at 42° N lat. They additionally requested alternative assessment model runs for China rockfish to explore area stratifications of north and south of 40°10' N lat., as well as north and south of 42° N lat. The SSC's Groundfish Subcommittee will meet on October 30 to review these revised assessments. Further, a new cowcod rebuilding analysis will be reviewed by the SSC's Groundfish Subcommittee at their October 30 meeting. The subcommittee's recommendations will be evaluated by the full SSC and they will, in turn, provide their recommendations to the Council.

Federal government employees responsible for producing the revised assessments and the cowcod rebuilding analysis have been on furlough through the November briefing book deadline. Therefore, these assessments and the cowcod rebuilding analysis are not provided in the advanced briefing book.

The Terms of Reference for stock assessments requires documentation of available compositional data for stocks assessed using data-moderate methods. An updated documentation of these data are provided in Supplemental Attachment 1.

The Council should consider the assessments and the cowcod rebuilding analysis, as well as the advice of the Scientific and Statistical Committee, other advisory bodies, and the public before adopting the new stock assessments and the rebuilding analysis for use in groundfish management in 2015 and beyond.

Council Action:

Adopt those stock assessments and rebuilding analyses recommended by the SSC.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.5.a, Supplemental Attachment 1: Available Age and Length Composition Data for the Nine Data-Moderate Stocks Undergoing Assessment in 2013.
2. Agenda Item H.5.a, Supplemental Attachment 2: 2013 Cowcod rebuilding analysis.
3. Agenda Item H.5.a, Supplemental Attachment 3 (or attachments): Data-moderate stock assessments for brown, China, copper rockfishes in 2013.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview John DeVore
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Data-Moderate Stock Assessments for Copper, Brown, and China Rockfishes; Adopt Final Rebuilding Analysis for Cowcod Rockfish

PFMC
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