

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS FOR 2011-2012 FISHERIES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) worked from Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 2 and Supplemental Attachment 3 to consider guidance for setting acceptable biological catch (ABCs) and annual catch limits (ACLs) for non-overfished species for 2011-12.

After much discussion about the change to using P* values for category 1 species and whether to use P* values or the existing 25 percent reduction for category 2 species and 50 percent reduction for category 3 species, the GAP suggests the following:

The GAP recommends using a P* value of 0.45 for all non-overfished species. This would result in a buffer of 4 percent for category 1 species, 9 percent for category 2 species, and 17 percent for category 3 species. This addresses scientific uncertainty to a higher degree than present. The Council would still have the option of selecting lower annual catch limits (ACLs) which accommodate other uncertainties.

ACLs and ABCs

Set all ACLs equal to ABCs, with the following exceptions:

Splitnose: This species should remain in the minor slope rockfish north complex. However, the GAP recommends a lower ACL value for the splitnose contribution to the complex. This species is a major contributor to that complex and fishing to a higher ACL runs the risk of overharvest of roughey and shortraker, two of the most vulnerable species within the complex.

Greenstriped: This species should continue to be managed in the minor shelf rockfish complexes. It is not a species targeted by any fishery sector.

Sablefish: The GAP considered both the apportionment to north and south of 36° and respective ACL's. The GAP recommends a north/south split of 68/32 percent and using alternative #3 for an ACL. Although this strands an additional 170 mt it accommodates fishery needs in both areas and is close to status quo.

Chilipepper: The GAP recommends setting an ACL equal to the ABC and retaining the stock split at 40°10'. A recommended ACL is 1981 mt for the south. It is recommended chilipepper remain in the minor shelf rockfish north complex.

Shortspine and Longspine: It is recommended using a scientific uncertainty adjustment to the southern ACLs for both these species to address the greater scientific uncertainty in the assessments of the southern portion of these stocks.

Dover sole: The recommendation for Dover sole is to set an ACL equal to 26,000 mt. This is not a stated alternative but is recommended because it accommodates the maximum historic landing for this species and well below the ABC.