

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON PACIFIC MACKEREL MANAGEMENT STATUS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) met to review management and research recommendations for Pacific mackerel for the 2013-2014 fishing year, and considered the management status of Pacific mackerel. In May 2011, a full stock assessment for Pacific mackerel was reviewed by a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel in La Jolla, California and subsequently approved by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) in June 2011 in Spokane, Washington. The 2011 assessment was used for two consecutive management cycles. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and the CPSMT recommended (in June 2012 and November 2012, respectively) the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) develop a catch-only projection estimate of the Pacific mackerel biomass (Agenda Item I.2.b, Attachment 2) to be used for setting the 2013-2014 harvest management specifications.

Harvest and Management Specifications

For the 2013-2014 fishing year, the CPSMT supports the SSC's recommendation of setting a sigma value for computing the buffer between the overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) to 0.72 to address uncertainty in the stock assessment projection model. The CPSMT recommends the following:

(1) establish an OFL of 57,316 mt, an ABC and annual catch limit (ACL) of 52,358 mt (based on a P^* of 0.45), and an annual catch target (ACT) of 39,269 mt (Table 1). The ACT is 75 percent of the ACL per the Council's actions in 2011 and 2012. The difference between the ACL and ACT is effectively an incidental set-aside of 13,090 mt for catch in non-directed fisheries. Of note, the 2013-2014 ACL and ACT are based on the ABC due to the Harvest Guideline (HG) being larger than the ABC;

(2) should the directed fishery realize the ACT (39,268 mt), the Council recommends that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) close the directed fishery and shift to an incidental catch-only fishery, with a 45 percent incidental landing allowance when Pacific mackerel are landed with other coastal pelagic species (CPS), with the exception that up to 1 mt of Pacific mackerel could be landed without landing any other CPS; and,

(3) to provide time to address the broader CPS assemblage assessment efforts, and due to low catches, limited additional sample information, and indications that the population's sustainability is not presently being compromised by fishing pressure, no stock assessment be completed for Pacific mackerel in 2014 due to a possible management status change in the following season.

Table 1. Pacific Mackerel Harvest Formulas **MT**

Biomass	272,932
OFL=Biomass*Fmsy*Distribution	57,316
ABC_{0.45} = Biomass*buffer_{0.45}*Fmsy*Distribution	52,358
ABC _{0.40} = Biomass*buffer _{0.40} *Fmsy*Distribution	47,759
ABC _{0.30} = Biomass*buffer _{0.30} *Fmsy*Distribution	39,292
ABC _{0.20} = Biomass*buffer _{0.20} *Fmsy*Distribution	31,269
HG = (Biomass - Cutoff) * Fraction * Distribution	53,494
ACL=LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO ABC	52,358
ACT=0.75* ACL	39,269

Change from Active to Monitored Status

The CPSMT recommends moving Pacific mackerel from actively managed to monitored status starting in the 2014-2015 season, based on very low catches, limited additional sample information, and indications that the population’s sustainability is not presently being compromised by fishing pressure. The CPSMT will consider multiple options for setting HCR levels for the monitored stock and make a recommendation to the Council at a future meeting.

PFMC
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