

ADOPTION OF ROCKFISH BYCATCH ESTIMATES
AND INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS IN RELEVANT FISHERIES

Situation: In November 1999, the Council adopted optimum yield (OY) recommendations for 2000, including new categories of minor rockfish. While most OYs were adjusted to account for anticipated bycatch, the OYs for minor rockfish and bocaccio were not adjusted. The Council asked the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to evaluate the management measures adopted for the various 2000 groundfish fisheries, including anticipated bycatch amounts. At the March 2000 meeting, the GMT responded, without an observer program or some other program to collect bycatch data, it could not estimate how much bycatch may occur this year. The GMT suggested, as a temporary alternative, the Council consider asking a selected group of industry and managers to advise them about more reasonable estimates. The Council concurred and directed the GMT to consult with groundfish fishers and Groundfish Advisory Subpanel members to assess whether anecdotal information from the fleet may provide better insight into appropriate bycatch estimates, trip limit ratios, and catch projections for the remainder of the year. This approach is somewhat analogous to the salmon "drop-off mortality" question, where no data existed, and the Council adopted the Salmon Technical Team/Scientific and Statistical Committee estimate of 5% as reasonable.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt an estimate for rockfish bycatch where the default estimate is now zero, and adjust trip limits as necessary.**

Reference Materials: None.

PFMC
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