

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
STATUS OF BYCATCH ESTIMATE

At the June meeting, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) raised a number of issues concerning the definition of strata for a new estimator of Pacific halibut bycatch mortality that is being developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center. In particular, the definition of latitudinal, depth, and seasonal strata boundaries was discussed, as was the association of halibut with arrowtooth flounder. As a followup to those concerns, the SSC was briefed by Ms. Cyreis Schmitt and Mr. Mark Saelens, who together described the current status of halibut bycatch estimation in Area 2A of the groundfish trawl fishery. In addition, they provided documentation of the rationale behind the use of specific boundaries to categorize the data into homogeneous strata. The SSC was in agreement that sufficient thought had gone into the analysis following their presentation. In particular, Mr. John Wallace provided a written point-by-point explanation for the various boundary selections that were used. In finalizing the analysis the SSC recommends that care be exercised in conversions between (1) round and net weight, (2) legal and sublegal fish, and (3) pounds to kilograms. The SSC looks forward to examining the final bycatch mortality estimates, which should be available at the November meeting.

PFMC
09/12/00