

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM STATEMENT ON STOCK ASSESSMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) discussed various options for independent review of stock assessments for actively managed species. Stock assessments for Pacific sardine and Pacific mackerel are currently conducted on an annual basis. The CPSMT recommends continuing assessments with this frequency due to the highly dynamic nature of coastal pelagic species (CPS) stocks. The Team recommends implementing periodic review of the assessments in a Groundfish stock assessment review (STAR) panel setting, but intensive reviews of this nature are probably not warranted on an annual basis. STAR panel reviews of sardine and Pacific mackerel stock assessments could be conducted triennially, with a less formal review by the CPSMT and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) during interim years. Full stock assessment reports should be developed and distributed following each STAR panel review. Details from interim-year assessments could be documented in comprehensive Executive Summaries which include relevant changes to data and the modeling approach. Executive Summaries for interim years will be available for review prior to setting harvest guidelines and will be included as an appendix to the annual stock assessment and fishery evaluation (SAFE) document. In the event that entirely new assessment models are developed, the CPSMT would request a STAR panel to review the models prior to implementation of results for setting harvest guidelines.

Should the Council concur with this recommendation, the Team suggests organizing the first joint STAR panel for sardine and Pacific mackerel during latter half of 2001 after the groundfish STAR process is completed. The STAR panel can be composed of one representative each from the CPSMT, CPS Advisory Subpanel and SSC, and an independent group of stock assessment experts. The CPSMT would like to work with the SSC in developing a Terms of Reference document for the CPS STAR panel process as well as guidelines for preparation of stock assessment documents.