

RESEARCH AND DATA NEEDS PROCESS AND ECONOMIC DATA PLAN

Situation: According to Council Operating Procedure (COP) 12 (Attachment 1), in even-numbered years the Council is called upon to update the Council's research and data needs document and its West Coast Economic Data Plan. However, updating these documents is a time-consuming task, and Council staff effort is currently focused on numerous high-priority groundfish issues. Focusing on the research and data needs would compete with effort on these other issues. The Council may wish to consider postponing update of the research and data needs document and the West Coast Economic Data Plan.

Under the Council Operating Procedures, these efforts usually start in April and culminate in September. This procedure is meant to communicate research and data needs in a clear and timely way in order to strengthen communication with National Marine Fisheries Service and to have the best chance of influencing NMFS operating plans and budget requests for upcoming years.

The research and data needs and economic data plan are intended to be long-term planning documents. If the delay is such that the documents are not updated until after next November, the COP 12 specified process for development of a consensus list of high priority initiatives could still proceed on schedule in December. The documents used in the process would be somewhat less current, a factor that would have to be taken into account by participants in the December consensus meeting. If delayed, the update process could be reinitiated at any time the Council believed appropriate.

Council Task:

1. Decide whether or not to postpone updating the research and data needs document and the West Coast Economic Data Plan.

Reference Materials:

1. Council Operating Procedure 12 (Exhibit I.4, Attachment 1)

Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Council Discussion and Guidance

PFMC
2/28/02