

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
STOCK ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2003

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) met with Dr. Richard Methot of the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) to review proposals for 2003 stock assessments. The GAP also had a lengthy discussion with Dr. Methot on survey methodology.

The GAP agrees with the NWFSC proposal to conduct full assessments on Pacific whiting, lingcod, bocaccio rockfish, cabezon, and black rockfish in 2003. The GAP also generally agrees with the proposal to conduct abbreviated assessments on Pacific ocean perch, darkblotched rockfish, cowcod, and yellowtail rockfish. However, the GAP believes that given the large number of abbreviated assessments that are being combined, at least one outside reviewer should participate in the review panel. As usual, the GAP expects one of its representatives and a representative of the Groundfish Management Team will serve on the full and abbreviated review panels as advisors.

The GAP strongly disagrees with the proposal that widow rockfish be treated under the abbreviated assessment procedure and instead recommends it be treated to a full review. The GAP notes that several of the data sets and indices that were used for past widow rockfish assessments will no longer be available due to substantial changes in management, such as the conscious effort of the whiting fleet to avoid widow rockfish. Given the need to more closely examine other data sets without the additional data being available, the GAP believes a full assessment and review is warranted.

In regard to data sets in general, the GAP notes there appear to be state data collection and analysis efforts which have not been made known to assessment authors. For example, several GAP members reported that extensive hook-and-line catch sampling has been conducted in California ports, but the data seems not to be available. The GAP suggests the Council strongly recommend to the states that data be collected, analyzed, and distributed in a way that it can be useful to assessment authors. Similarly, state and federal data collection efforts on other species, including salmon, should be coordinated with the groundfish research program to determine whether fisheries independent or environmental data can be collected to enhance our understanding of groundfish.

PFMC
09/11/02