

STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND REBUILDING ANALYSES FOR 2004 GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT

Situation: The Council process for setting groundfish harvest levels and other specifications depends on periodic assessments of the status of groundfish stocks, rebuilding analyses of those stocks that are overfished and managed under rebuilding constraints, and a report from an established assessment review body or, in the Council parlance, a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel. As appropriate, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) recommends the best available science for groundfish management decision-making in the Council process. The SSC reviews new assessments, rebuilding analyses, and STAR Panel reports and recommends the data and analyses that should be used to set groundfish harvest levels and other specifications for the following year (or biennial management period in the context of multi-year management).

Seven new groundfish stock assessments have been conducted and reviewed by STAR Panels for use in setting groundfish harvest levels in 2004. Of these seven stocks, five are overfished and are the subject of rebuilding analyses that are also important for establishing 2004 harvest levels. The seven groundfish stocks with new assessments include Pacific ocean perch, widow rockfish, bocaccio, black rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, yellowtail rockfish, and cowcod. Pacific ocean perch, widow rockfish, bocaccio, darkblotched rockfish, and cowcod are overfished and managed under management strategies influenced by rebuilding analyses. Of these five overfished stocks, four have new rebuilding analyses that should be considered when deciding 2004 harvest specifications. The cowcod analysis is not a typical assessment or rebuilding analysis, but is instead a review of how well management measures have worked to control fishing mortality to within the harvest levels set by the Council since the stock was declared overfished. A more complete cowcod assessment and rebuilding analysis was not possible given the closed area and non-retention strategies used to rebuild the stock and the lack of targeted research on stock status.

The Council should consider the new assessments, rebuilding analyses, and STAR Panel reports, as well as the advice of the SSC, other advisory bodies, and the public before adopting the new stock assessments and rebuilding analyses for use in 2004 groundfish management.

Council Task:

- 1. Consider Approving Stock Assessments for Use in 2004.**
- 2. Consider Approving Rebuilding Analyses for Use in 2004 Fishery Management and Long Term Rebuilding Plans**

Reference Materials:

1. Status and Future Prospects for the Pacific Ocean Perch Resource in Waters off Washington and Oregon as Assessed in 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 1).
2. Rebuilding Analysis for Pacific Ocean Perch for 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 2).
3. Pacific Ocean Perch STAR Panel Meeting Report (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 3).
4. Status of the Widow Rockfish Resource in 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 4).
5. Rebuilding Analysis for Widow Rockfish in 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 5).
6. Widow Rockfish STAR Panel Meeting Report (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 6).
7. Status of Bocaccio Off California in 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 7).
8. Bocaccio Rebuilding Analysis for 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 8).
9. Bocaccio STAR Panel Report (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 9).
10. The Status of Black Rockfish (*Sebastes melanops*) Off Oregon and Northern California in 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 10).
11. Black Rockfish STAR Panel Report (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 11).
12. Cowcod Rebuilding Review (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 12).
13. Draft STAR Lite Panel Report (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 13).
14. Status of the Yellowtail Rockfish Resource in 2003 (Exhibit B.3, Attachment 14).
15. Darkblotched Rockfish Stock Assessment (Exhibit B.3, Supplemental Attachment 15).
16. Darkblotched Rockfish Rebuilding Analysis (Exhibit B.3, Supplemental Attachment 16).

Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Approve Stock Assessments and Rebuilding Analyses

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PFMC
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