

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON PACIFIC MACKEREL HARVEST
GUIDELINE FOR 2003 THROUGH 2004

Dr. Kevin Hill discussed the 2003-2004 Pacific mackerel harvest guideline (HG) with the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The recommended HG is 10,652 mt based on the maximum sustainable yield control rule in Amendment 8 to the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) fishery management plan. The SSC notes that the HG is based on the same stock assessment methodology and harvest control rule used in 2002, with the addition of one additional year of catch data and new data for four of the six indices of abundance. Compared with the 2002 assessment, the biomass time series for the 2003 assessment is 10% lower over the last decade. The estimate of the July 1, 2002 biomass from the assessment is 30% lower than the projection of this biomass from last year's assessment.

The methodology on which this assessment is based is not fully documented in the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report precluding a detailed review by the SSC at this time. However, this assessment will be reviewed along with the sardine assessment during a STAR Panel meeting in May 2004. Dr. Hill outlined some planned changes to the assessment methodology and the data used when fitting the model. The SSC suggested that the possibility of using data on bycatch in the whiting fishery be explored to develop an abundance index for the component of the population off Oregon and Washington.

PFMC
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