

Scoping Session
2005-2006 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures
Hilton Hotel - San Diego Del Mar
Boardroom 1100
15575 Jimmy Durante Blvd.
Del Mar, CA 92014
(858) 732-5200
November 2, 2003 1 P.M.-3 P.M.

Attendance:

Commercial fishing	1
Recreational fishing	4
Government agency	5
Conservation org.	1
Other	2
Total	13

Recreational Fishing

- Use California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) data program, not Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS).
- In previous analyses there is limited information about the economic impact of restrictions on the sports fishing sector; it should be recognized that the economic value per fish caught is greater in this sector compared to the commercial sector. An analysis could highlight the cost of limiting recreational fishing by estimating the economic value resulting from no restrictions on this sector, such that a greater proportion of the optimum yield (OY) was allocated to this sector. Such an analysis may show that we are "shooting ourselves in the foot" with management restraints on sports fishing. This analysis only needs to look at those species where there is an overlap between recreational and commercial sectors.
- Need to look more at the social impacts of management. This includes describing the culture of sports fishing and its relationship to tourism. Such an analysis would also show how sports fishing supports tourism.
- The social and cultural value of fishing is recognized if you are Indian; the socio-cultural value of recreational fishery resources to non-Indians also should be recognized.

Commercial Fishing

- The Council seems to only consider the economic value of processors.

- Spatial management is executed by depth, but not by bottom substrate, etc.; this affects fishing communities in different ways. It arbitrarily takes away fishing areas for a community that has fished that area in a selective way. The boundary lines of Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) are established to make things easier for enforcement. But with the vessel monitoring system (VMS) could overlay species distribution with historic fishing grounds to make more complicated spatial management that has less impact on fishing communities.
- The RCA isn't really hurting communities as far as trawlers are concerned; its more of a problem of processors not wanting to buy the types of fish that can be caught cleanly. For example, the processors put the limit on petrale sole landings even when management regulations do not limit by landings of this species. Processors then offer a lower price for fish brought in over the limit. This forces fishermen to discard target species because the price is too low to make it economically worthwhile to land fish in excess of the limit established by the processor. January to December and November to December are the key times of year when this happens.
- Assuming behavior is to maximize profit, the analysis should look at fish processing as part of a system and ask whether you are maintaining the viability of processors in this system.
- Maybe look at alternative systems that would provide more benefits to fishermen.

Recommendations for Groundfish Management

- Move electronic data collection for as many sectors as possible. Even if electronic data collection is adopted for trawl fleet (as part of an individual trawl quota [ITQ] management system) such technologies need to be adopted for other sectors.
- There is insulation between sectors in terms of how management system deals with the effects of catches in a particular sector. Right now catches in one sector can blow the OY for the entire fishing industry coastwide. "Soft allocation" is okay (versus "hard" allocations), but if reporting in one sector has a long time lag, this causes problems because restrictions are then required on all sectors to compensate.
- Even if soft allocations continue, implement hard bycatch caps by sector.
- The Council needs to make the decision that is best for the fishery management and then tell enforcement what they need to do. Instead, management is constrained by what enforcement says is feasible. At the least, the environmental impact statement (EIS) should have an analysis of why some types of management can't be done because of enforcement limitations.
- When accounting for total mortality, look at the reasons for discard rates (derived from observer data). Discards could be occurring due to market conditions/processors, and such knowledge could inform the management system.
- Why are black rockfish OYs lower in 2005-2006 than in 2004?

EIS Methodology

- Describe and evaluate ecosystem impacts: look at ecosystem linkages and disclose what is known and not known about ecosystem linkages. Analyze ecosystem effects on the smallest spatial scale feasible.
- Use modern tools to better understand the fisheries: use groundfish fleet restructuring project (conducted by Ecostrust) as a framework for the analysis. (This tool can be updated with new data, such as from the observer program and the essential fish habitat [EFH] EIS. It is recognized that using this tool may take some time).
- Evaluate the impacts of fishery decisions on individual communities, not just fishery sectors.
- Commercial fishing.
- Find a better means to understand and express impacts. Present the results of analyses in graphical format; it is easier for the reader to understand.
- Create linkages between the different analyses being prepared by the Council/NMFS (e.g., EFH, bycatch, and overfished species EISs). None of the EIS analyses done by the Council/NMFS look at everything, but there is considerable overlap between them. Is there some way to bring these analyses together in the management measures EIS? Include a programmatic section in the document that describes the linkages between these EIS analyses. Also, the cumulative effects analysis should be used as a way to look at alternatives from EFH and bycatch program EIS in this EIS overtly.
- Previous economic analyses have under-estimated the economic costs of limiting catches in the January-February and November-February periods when petrale sole catch is not limited by management measures.

PFMC
11/05/03

