

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GROUND FISH REBUILDING PLAN REVIEW AND STOCK
ASSESSMENT REVIEW PANELS

Under the Terms of Reference, “the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) is responsible for identifying and evaluating potential management actions based on the best available scientific information.” To that end, the GMT endorses the request from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission to include in the Terms of Reference direction to evaluate regional stock differences or identify the information needed to make such an evaluation. The GMT believes that carrying forward through the assessment process any regional biological differences in stocks where they might exist could assist us in crafting appropriate management measures.

The assessment should include a precise summary of the key elements of the assessment and all of the required management parameters in the executive summary. This would not only greatly facilitate the work of the GMT, but could also reduce the need to have members of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) or stock assessment review (STAR) panels walk the GMT through stock assessments in which this information is either obscure or missing. Given the number of stock assessments that are to be dealt with in this cycle, a clear summary is crucial in order to be effective and successful. At a minimum, this summary should include:

- Acceptable biological catch (ABC) and optimum yield (OY) projections for ten years.
- Projections of spawning biomass and exploitable biomass for the same time frame.
- Estimates of appropriate F rates.
- Past management performance.
- For rebuilding species:
 - Estimates of P_{MAX} at $F=0$.
 - F rate and P_{MAX} at T_{TARGET} .
 - Projections of management specifications (i.e., ABC, OY), and estimates of the F rate, T_{MAX} , and T_{MIN} under rebuilding likelihoods ranging from $P_{MAX} = 50\%$ to the P_{MAX} under $F=0$.
 - Progress toward rebuilding.

Since a number of data sources are undergoing revision, the date of data extraction should be included with data tables.

The GMT feels that the STAR panel process, in which the full suite of data for a species is being considered by analysts, reviewers, industry and management advisors, is the most reasonable forum to identify the preferred model describing the status of a stock. However, if that is not possible, then the Terms of Reference should require that decision tables and sensitivity analyses be forwarded for all models that are considered plausible.