

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON PACIFIC
MACKEREL HARVEST GUIDELINE FOR THE 2006/2007 SEASON

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) heard a report from Dr. Paul Crone of the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) regarding the Pacific mackerel stock assessment and proposed harvest guideline for the 2006-2007 season. Dr. Crone reported that the 2006-07 assessment, developed using the ASAP model, resulted in a biomass estimate of 112,700 mt, higher than the previous year.

Based on the most recent information, the CPSMT is recommending a harvest guideline of 19,845 mt for the 2006-2007 season, an increase of 2,426 mt from 2005-06 (17,419 mt).

Based on this harvest guideline, the CPSAS is recommending a directed fishery for 13,845 mt to begin on July 1, 2006. There will be 6,000 mt as a set aside for the incidental fishery. After the directed fishery quota is reached, the fishery would revert to an incidental-catch-only fishery. Under this incidental-catch-only fishery, the CPSAS recommends a 40% incidental catch rate when Pacific mackerel are landed with other coastal pelagic species (CPS), except that up to 1 mt of Pacific mackerel could be landed without landing any other CPS.

The CPSAS recommends an in-season review of the mackerel season for the March 2007 Council meeting, if needed, with the possibility of re-opening the directed fishery as an automatic action if a sufficient amount of the harvest guideline remains.

The CPSAS is concerned about the accuracy of Pacific mackerel landings data from Mexico and notes that the magnitude of Pacific mackerel landings in Mexico may be underestimated. The CPSAS recommends the Council send letter to the organizers of the Trinational Sardine Forum, including National Marine Fisheries Service - Southwest Fishery Science Center, requesting that Pacific mackerel issues be included in the forum's proceedings.

PFMC
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