

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
PACIFIC MACKEREL HARVEST GUIDELINE FOR 2007-2008

The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) met May 8-9, 2007 to review the latest stock assessment of Pacific mackerel. In 2007, a full assessment for Pacific mackerel was conducted and reviewed by a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel in La Jolla, California May 1-4. The CPSMT heard presentations by Dr. Emmanis Dorval and Dr. Kevin Hill of the Stock Assessment Team and the STAR Panel chair, Mr. Tom Jagielo. The CPSMT supported conclusions from the most recent Pacific mackerel stock assessment and further recommends the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) adopt the resulting acceptable biological catch (ABC) associated with the harvest control rule stipulated in this species' fishery management plan for the 2007-2008 management season (i.e., July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008). Based on a total stock biomass estimate of 359,290 mt, the ABC for U.S. fisheries is 71,629 mt.

Due to uncertainty associated with changes to modeling parameters recommended by the STAR Panel and the fact that the U.S. fishery appears to be market limited to roughly 40,000 mt, the CPSMT recommends setting the 2007-2008 harvest guideline (HG) no higher than 40,000 mt. This HG recommendation is roughly double the HG adopted by the Council for the 2006-2007 fishing year (19,845 mt). The significant improvement in the Pacific mackerel stock status is primarily the result of two factors: 1) adjusting stock recruitment variability (σ_R) to be more consistent with the biology of the species, and 2) an improvement in the catch-per-unit-effort in the commercial passenger fishing vessel time series.

Recent U.S. annual landings have been well below the established HGs for the directed fishery. The 'cutoff' value (18,200 mt) in the harvest control rule essentially serves as a proxy for a minimum stock size threshold. The current total stock biomass estimate (359,290 mt) is well above this threshold level. However, uncertainty still exists concerning the magnitude of fisheries in Mexico that harvest Pacific mackerel and thus, caution is recommended when evaluating fishery impacts on transboundary Pacific mackerel stocks.

PFMC
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