

STOCK ASSESSMENT PLANNING FOR 2011-2012 MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The Council approved Amendment 17 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan as a means of providing for a biennial management cycle, more opportunity for public input, regulatory efficiencies, and various improvements in the management process. In this process there is a year in which assessments are done to inform decisions for the following biennial management cycle, followed by a year for deciding the new groundfish harvest specifications and management measures. This agenda item concerns planning for new groundfish stock assessments that are anticipated to be done next year, which will be used to decide the harvest specifications and management measures for 2011 and 2012 groundfish fisheries.

Last year 10 full groundfish stock assessments were conducted, peer-reviewed, and ultimately adopted for deciding 2009 and 2010 harvest specifications and management measures (not including Pacific whiting). The Council sponsored a workshop to critically review the recent groundfish stock assessment process and invited the participants to explore improvements to this process. The summary minutes of the December 19, 2007 Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Workshop with recommended assessment process improvements are provided in Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1. One important recommendation was that the Council put forward preliminary decisions on stock assessment planning elements at the March Council meeting and take final action at the June Council meeting.

Dr. Elizabeth Clarke, Division Director at the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northwest Fisheries Science Center, will report on possible stock assessments for the next biennial fishery management cycle and recommended criteria for prioritizing these assessments (Agenda Item F.2.b, Attachment 1).

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) developed a draft Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment and Review Process for 2009-2010 (Agenda Item F.2.c, Supplemental Attachment 1), which specifies how the next assessment process should occur and defines the roles and responsibilities of various entities contributing to this process. Dr. Martin Dorn, the SSC's Groundfish Subcommittee chair, will report on this draft Terms of Reference. Additionally, Dr. Dorn will present a draft Terms of Reference for Rebuilding Analyses (Agenda Item F.2.c, Supplemental Attachment 2) developed by the SSC.

The Council is to consider the input from NMFS, the advisory bodies, and the public; as well as the recommendations of the stock assessment review workshop participants before providing a preliminary decision on 2009-2010 stock assessment priorities by species, type of assessment (full or update), and language for the draft Terms of Reference for both the Groundfish Stock Assessment and Review Process and Groundfish Rebuilding Analyses. There will be a public review opportunity between the March and June Council meetings should the Council decide to take final action on the 2009 and 2010 assessment process matters at the June meeting. The Council is scheduled to make final decisions on agenda item scheduling for future meetings under agenda item B.5.

Council Action:

1. **Adopt for Public Review the List of Stocks To Be Assessed in 2009.**
2. **Adopt for Public Review the Preliminary Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment and Review Process For 2009-2010.**
3. **Adopt for Public Review the 2009 Stock Assessment Review Schedule.**
4. **Adopt for Public Review the Preliminary Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analyses.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1: Draft Summary Minutes of the December 19, 2007 Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Workshop.
2. Agenda Item F.2.b, Attachment 1: Table 1. Possible Schedule for West Coast Groundfish Assessments in 2009 and Beyond.
3. Agenda Item F.2.c, Supplemental Attachment 1: Draft Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment and Review Process for 2009-2010.
4. Agenda Item F.2.c, Supplemental Attachment 2: Draft Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analyses.

Agenda Order:

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| a. Agenda Item Overview | John DeVore |
| b. Stock Assessment Options | Elizabeth Clarke |
| c. Preliminary Stock Assessment Terms of Reference | Martin Dorn |
| d. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies | |
| e. Public Comment | |
| f. Council Action: Adopt for Public Review the List of Stocks to be Assessed, and Preliminary Terms of Reference. | |

PFMC
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