

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 16 - ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS
AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (MSRA) established several new fishery management provisions pertaining to National Standard 1 (NS1). On January 16, 2009, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a final rule in the Federal Register to amend the guidelines for NS1 that provide guidance to the Councils in revising their Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) to conform to the new MSRA requirements. Specifically, there is now a need to implement overfishing levels (OFLs), annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch target (ACTs), and accountability measures (AMs) by 2011 for most species, and by 2010 for those species designated as being subject to overfishing. The major task for the SSC, however, is to satisfy provisions of the MSRA to redefine the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) to account for scientific uncertainty.

The Salmon Amendment Committee (SAC) has met several times to consider Amendment 16 to bring salmon management into conformance with the MSRA. Dr. Peter Dygert presented their progress to date to the SSC.

Their major conclusions regarding the task ahead of them are that: (1) meeting the requirements of Amendment 16 is going to require a major rewrite of the salmon FMP, (2) there are going to be substantial changes to Status Determination Criteria (i.e., overfished and overfishing), and (3) there will be substantial changes to salmon management south of Cape Falcon.

The SSC discussed these issues with members of the SAC and provided them with information on how other species groups, including groundfish and coastal pelagic species, had approached the new guidelines. The SSC offered to work closely with the SAC so that our review of Amendment 16 will go smoothly.

PFMC
09/15/09