

FINAL ACTION ON SARDINE ASSESSMENT, SPECIFICATIONS, AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

At this meeting, the Council will consider the 2016 Pacific sardine stock assessment, and will adopt harvest specifications and management measures for the 2016-17 Pacific sardine fishing season. The 2016 assessment (Agenda Item H.1.a, Stock Assessment Report) is an update assessment, based on the 2014 full assessment. Update assessments carry forward the same fundamental structure of the last full assessment, including the same population dynamics model, data sources, and statistical platform. Although minor changes are allowed, update assessments are generally restricted to the addition of new data that have become available since the last full assessment.

The assessment was reviewed by the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Subcommittee of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) in March 2016. The full SSC will review the Subcommittee's report, and will then make an overfishing limit (OFL) and corresponding acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendation to the Council.

The stock assessment presents two alternative biomass estimates, based on separate assumptions of recruitment value. The SSC will endorse a single estimate for Council consideration. The Council will consider a range of ABC levels associated with various P* alternatives, and will establish harvest specifications and management measures. The CPS Management Team and the CPS Advisory Subpanel will also provide recommendations to the Council on the 2016-17 sardine season.

The Quinault Indian Nation provided notice of their intent to participate in the upcoming sardine fishery, with an anticipated allocation need of 800 metric tons (mt) (Agenda Item H.1.b, Tribal Report).

As with the previous year's stock assessment, both biomass estimates falls below the sardine harvest control rule (HCR) Cutoff threshold of 150,000 mt. In low biomass conditions when the stock is below the Cutoff but above the overfished threshold, the Fishery Management Plan allows for the establishment of incidental harvest allowances and the continuation of the live bait fishery.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt the Pacific Sardine Assessment and Pacific sardine OFL.**
- 2. Select P*, ABC, ACL, and, if appropriate, ACT Specifications and Management Measures, Including Consideration of a Quinault Tribal Allocation.**
- 3. Adopt Incidental Catch Allowance.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.1.a, Stock Assessment Report Executive Summary: *Assessment of the Pacific Sardine Resource in 2016 for U.S.A Management in 2016-17. (FULL DOCUMENT ELECTRONIC ONLY)*

2. Agenda Item H.1.b, Tribal Report: Letter from Ed Johnstone, Quinault Fisheries Policy Spokesperson, regarding the Quinault Indian Nation's intent to establish a tribal allocation and to enter the 2016-17 Pacific sardine fishery.

Agenda Order:

H.1 Final Action on Sardine Assessment, Specifications, and Management Measures

- a. Stock Assessment Report
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt Pacific Sardine Assessment and Final Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for the 2016-2017 Sardine Fishery

Kerry Griffin
Kevin Hill

PFMC
03/22/16