

FINAL ACTION ON STOCK ASSESSMENT PLANS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR GROUND FISH AND COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES

This agenda item concerns planning for new groundfish stock assessments that are anticipated to be conducted in 2017, which will be used to inform the harvest specifications and management measures decisions for groundfish fisheries in 2019 and beyond.

The decision on which stocks to assess next year entails whether the assessment should be a full assessment that requires peer review by a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel, a data-moderate assessment, or an update assessment that requires only a review by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). Council policy on this subject has been to schedule no more than ten full assessments in a given year with no more than two full assessments reviewed at each STAR Panel. A maximum of five STAR Panels should be considered for next year.

The Council decided their preliminary list of stock assessment priorities for public review at their April 2016 meeting. The preliminary list of full assessments include blue rockfish, deacon rockfish, lingcod, yelloweye rockfish, and yellowtail rockfish. The preliminary list of update assessments include bocaccio and darkblotched rockfish. The Council is soliciting comment from the NMFS Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science centers and the public on this preliminary list and suggested there may be consideration for other assessments, pending the ability of the Science Centers' capacity to do more assessments as follows: arrowtooth flounder (update), blackgill rockfish (update), bank rockfish (full), Pacific ocean perch (full), cabezon off Oregon and Washington (full), and California scorpionfish (full or data-moderate). The California Department of Fish and Wildlife expressed concern they do not have the resources to contribute to assessment of any California nearshore stocks.

Drs. Michelle McClure and Jim Hastie, National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC), will report on proposed stock assessment priorities, potential data sources to inform these proposed assessments, and the Science Centers' capacity to address Council stock assessment priorities (Agenda Item G.8, Attachments 1 and 2). While the proposed stock assessment priorities are helpful in deciding which stocks are assessed next year, it is important to note these "priorities" are informative, not prescriptive.

There are three Terms of Reference (TOR) that guide the stock assessment process; one specifies how the next assessment process should occur and defines the roles and responsibilities of various entities contributing to this process, one guides the development of rebuilding analyses used to develop harvest specifications and rebuilding plans for overfished species, and one guides how new methods are reviewed and recommended for scientific activities that inform analyses used in management decision-making. These TOR have been reviewed by some members of the SSC and others, and are included as Agenda Item G.8, Attachments 3, 4, and 5, respectively.

The Council will consider the input from NMFS, state and Tribal agencies, the advisory bodies, and the public before providing a final decision on 2017-2018 stock assessment priorities by species, type of assessment (full, data-moderate, or update), and language for the three draft TOR.

Council Action:

1. **Adopt Final List of Stocks to be Assessed in 2017;**
2. **Adopt the TOR for the Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species Stock Assessment and Review Process for 2017-2018;**
3. **Adopt the SSC Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis;**
4. **Adopt the TOR for the Methodology Review Process for Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species; and**
5. **Adopt the 2017 Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Schedule.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.8, Attachment 1: Prioritization of Species and NMFS Final Recommendations for Stock Assessments in 2017.
2. Agenda Item G.8, Attachment 2: Final Excel Workbook of Data Informing 2017 Stock Assessment Prioritization (*Available Electronically Only*).
3. Agenda Item G.8, Attachment 3: Draft Terms of Reference for the Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species Stock Assessment and Review Process for 2017-2018.
4. Agenda Item G.8, Attachment 4: Draft Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis for 2017-2018.
5. Agenda Item G.8, Attachment 5: Draft Terms of Reference for the Methodology Review Process for Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species for 2017-2018.

Agenda Order:

- G.8 Final Action on Stock Assessment Plans and Terms of Reference (TOR) for Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species John DeVore
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Final List and Schedule of Groundfish Stocks for Assessment in 2017, the Stock Assessment and Methodology Review TOR for Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species, and the Rebuilding TOR for Overfished Groundfish stocks, as Necessary

PFMC
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