

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON METHODOLOGY REVIEW FINAL TOPIC SELECTION

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) met with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to discuss methodology review topics for models used to develop regulatory specifications for the 2019-2020 biennium. In addition, the SSC discussed assessment methodologies and other methods informing management in need of review prior to application. The SSC and the GMT also discussed the potential timing of the reviews relative to upcoming workload and stock assessment cycle.

One meeting of the SSC groundfish sub-committee is proposed prior to March to review methods that may be used in 2017 stock assessments. Review of geostatistical methods proposed for use in developing indices of abundance will require inclusion of an outside expert reviewer with particular knowledge of the methods employed to compliment the experience of existing SSC sub-committee members.

Review of the discard mortality rates proposed by the GMT could be carried out at the March Council meeting. A webinar between the GMT and the SSC groundfish subcommittee is proposed to be held after the March briefing book deadline to prime discussion at the March review meeting.

Another meeting of the SSC and the GMT is proposed for the September Council meeting to review methodologies to be used in the regulatory specification process. While the March meeting will only require attendance of presenters and the SSC groundfish sub-committee, the SSC recommends that a representative from the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program attend the September meeting to answer questions regarding methods employed in generating mortality estimates used in the nearshore and non-nearshore models under review. Review of the proposed probability analysis to be used to evaluate the risk of exceeding catch limits may be taken up at the mop-up meeting in September as time allows.

Each of the items proposed by the SSC and GMT provided below are followed by the meeting at which they are proposed to be discussed.

The GMT proposed the following methodologies for review:

- Review of the nearshore catch projection model improvements. (September Council Meeting)
- Review non-nearshore catch projection model improvements. (September Council Meeting)
- Review of changes to discard mortality rates. (March Council Meeting)
- Probability analysis used to evaluate the risk of exceeding catch limits (Mop-up Meeting in September).

Methodologies identified for review by the SSC:

- Development of new catch per unit effort standardization methods. (Groundfish Sub-committee Meeting before March)
- Development of a revised steepness prior (h). (Groundfish Sub-committee Meeting before March)

- Updating of the prior on natural mortality (M). (Groundfish Sub-committee Meeting before March)
- Evaluation of methods used in the weighting of length and age composition in Stock Synthesis model. (Groundfish Sub-committee Meeting before March)
- Adjustments to sigma used in quantifying the extent of scientific uncertainty contributing to the buffer between the OFL and the ABC. (Mop-up Meeting in September).

The SSC also discussed the draft report on accepted practice guidelines for groundfish stock assessments provided in Agenda Item F.2, Attachment 1. This is a living document that will be posted to the Council website and is intended to be suggestive rather than proscriptive, though explanation of deviations should be provided by the stock assessment author.

PFMC
11/17/16