

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
METHODOLOGY REVIEW PRELIMINARY TOPIC SELECTION

The Scientific and Statistical Committee reviewed potential topics for Coastal Pelagic Species Methodology Review in 2017. Mr. Kirk Lynn (California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)) presented the Proposal for Methodology Review of the Southern California Coastal Pelagic Species Survey (Agenda Item G.2, Attachment 1). This proposal contains two projects: Project 1, to develop relative indices of nearshore abundance for sardine and anchovy; and Project 2, to develop an inshore correction factor for the Acoustic-Trawl Method (ATM) survey index/estimate. Both projects rely on aerial survey estimates of observed biomass. For Project 1, the goal is to cover the entire mainland and island coastal areas in the Southern California Bight, while for Project 2, the goal is to cover both an inshore portion of ATM transect lines and extensions of the lines to the coast over the nearshore area not covered by the ATM. Information from both areas would then be used to estimate the proportion of biomass missed by the ATM survey. Either project individually, or in conjunction, could potentially provide expansion factors for the ATM survey. Mr. Lynn indicated that the proposed methods would be ready for review by Spring 2017.

The SSC provided comments on the proposed methodologies, including recommendations for further analyses and documentation to be completed prior to the review. One question is whether the projects will be limited to the Southern California Bight or if one or both would be extended over a larger area of the west coast. Another issue is that the point sets used to validate the pilot estimates of school biomasses are limited to those small enough to be fully wrapped by the gear. The lack of point sets for larger schools can result in bias in the total biomass estimates, while acoustic estimates of school depth could, in conjunction with school surface area, provide for the validation of biomass estimates for these schools.

The SSC concluded that the Southern California Coastal Pelagic Species Survey should be ready for a methodology review in Spring 2017. The SSC recommends the CDFW work with the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) to ensure participation of assessment scientists and provision of a Center for Independent Experts (CIE) reviewer. It will be important to work with assessment scientists prior to the review to clarify how the aerial survey data could be incorporated into assessments.

Mr. Dale Sweetnam indicated that the SWFSC is suggesting a review of the ATM survey in early 2018. Given the need to obtain CIE involvement, the SWFSC may wish to present a proposal in April 2017.