GROUNDFISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON METHODOLOGY REVIEW - FINAL TOPIC SELECTION

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) supports the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) recommendations for the three proposals to be reviewed for potential use in future stock assessment cycles (Agenda Item H.10.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1), and offers further commentary below.

First, the proposal by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to use a hybrid visual and hydroacoustic survey could provide cost-effective means to better understand the size of spawning biomass and the relative stock status of important semi-pelagic nearshore rockfish stocks (e.g., black, blue, deacon). Key features include the ability to:

- Estimate absolute abundance to better inform the size of spawning biomass, with a primary objective to more fully survey populations;
- Provide a potentially unbiased index of relative abundance;
- Better inform recruitment due to being able to detect smaller fish than those caught by fisheries; and
- Provide representative length and age compositions across the entire size distribution of the surveyed populations.

Second, the Northwest Fisheries Science Center's proposal for data moderate methods that incorporate an index of relative abundance and length compositions should result in more robust assessments for data-limited stocks, as length compositions can provide meaningful indicators if recruitment is occurring.

Finally, the GMT supports the SSC recommendations (Agenda Item H.10.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1) to reexamine the reference points for elasmobranchs.

PFMC
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