NATIONAL STANDARD 1 GUIDELINES
AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Agenda Item H.4.a
NMFS Presentation 1
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Background

The MSRA required FMPs to...

“establish a mechanism for specifying annual catch limits in the plan (including a multiyear plan), implementing regulations, or annual specifications, at a level such that overfishing does not occur in the fishery, including measures to ensure accountability.”
Definition Framework: \( OFL \geq ABC \geq ACL \)

- **Overfishing Limit** → Corresponds with MSY
- **Acceptable Biological Catch**
- **Annual Catch Limit**
- **Annual Catch Target**

- ABC may not exceed OFL. The distance between the OFL and ABC depends on how scientific uncertainty is accounted for in the ABC control rule.

- AMs prevent the ACL from being exceeded and correct or mitigate overages of the ACL if they occur. ACTs are recommended in the system of accountability measures so that ACL is not exceeded.
Background

An **ACL** is a limit on the total catch of a stock or stock complex. Councils may, but are not required to, divide an ACL into **sector-ACLs** to meet a wide variety of management objectives, including management uncertainty.

**AMs** are management controls that help ensure accountability by preventing the ACL from being exceeded and correcting or mitigating overages of the ACL if they occur.
Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery AMs

The Council has a diverse, flexible, and largely effective system of AMs in place for most Pacific Coast groundfish stocks and stock complexes.
Overview of Pacific Coast Groundfish Stocks

Trawl=white, Non-trawl (LEFG and OA)=gray, Recreational=black, and Other (IOA, pink shrimp, halibut, and research)=blue
Recommendations

- Evaluate the tradeoff of the flexibility in the existing AM system against the time required to develop custom AM responses for each situation. There may be sector or fishery-wide catch limits for which the Council can develop automatic response.

- Evaluate AMs when changing allocation structures. For example, switching the at-sea sector allocations to set-asides means the automatic closure authority for allocation is no longer necessary. However, the Council may need to develop a policy for shifting back to allocation management if set-aside catch consistently contributes to ACL overages.
Recommendations

- Evaluate existing ambiguous AMs (e.g., NMFS closure authority for shorebased IFQ/MS/CP sectors in sections 660.140, 660.150, 660.160) and give clear direction to NMFS for when these authorities should be used for different stocks.

- Consider whether there are additional AMs beyond the list of existing tools that may allow the Council to respond to catch limit overages.

- For the 2021-22 harvest specifications, shortbelly rockfish is the only stock for which NMFS would recommend the Council consider developing automatic AMs in the second year of the cycle (2022) to address any overages of the ACL that may occur in the first year of the cycle (2021).