

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
INITIAL HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE ACTIONS FOR
2023-2024 MANAGEMENT

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed [Agenda Item C.8, Attachment 1](#) and the [GMT008 table](#) (Draft Annual Groundfish Harvest Specifications) on the Pacific Fisheries Information Network. The SSC reviewed 1) the overfishing limits (OFLs) for 2023 and 2024 under default harvest control rules, 2) the category designation for each stock and area, and 3) the constant or time-varying sigmas (i.e., increasing scientific uncertainty with the age of assessment) used to calculate annual acceptable biological catch (ABC) buffers.

Reviewed OFLs were obtained directly from 2021 assessments (including updates and projections) and from previously conducted assessments and projections. Changes made since Attachment 1 was produced include correcting the Dover sole ACL to 50,000 metric tons; revising quillback rockfish in Washington to be category 3 and therefore having a constant OFL; updating projections for quillback rockfish off Oregon to reflect updated Groundfish Management Team advice on 2021 and 2022 removals; and changing greenstriped rockfish to category 3 given when the assessment was conducted (2009).

Further review of the spiny dogfish assessment, the stock designations for copper rockfish, and additional age data for copper and quillback rockfishes will be subjects at the “mop-up” review panel on September 29th and 30th. Uncertainty remains as to which species will be included in the Nearshore Rockfish South complex for 2023-2024, in particular if copper and quillback rockfishes will be included in that complex. Therefore, at the November meeting, the SSC expects to review OFLs/OFL contributions for spiny dogfish, copper rockfish off California, quillback rockfish off of California, the Nearshore Rockfish South complex, and in other cases if alternative projections are requested or new discrepancies discovered. In addition, the SSC has increasing concerns with how species that have been fully assessed are managed within complexes, including those above target levels (e.g., vermilion) for which recent catches have been greater than their contributions to the complex.

The SSC conditionally endorses the values in GMT008 with the changes noted above, although it has not checked every value in that table. The SSC will review all values before the November meeting.

The SSC expresses appreciation to the Northwest Fisheries Science Center and Southwest Fisheries Science Center stock assessors and their co-authors for completing the assessments and additional analyses to provide management advice with respect to the specifications process.