

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
STOCK ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE-FINAL ACTION

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) discussed the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for stock assessments of coastal pelagic species (CPS). Ms. Jessi Doerpinghaus (Council Staff) was available to provide details. The SSC revisited the revised draft TOR provided in the advance November briefing book and recommends:

1. Revising font size and shading in the bottom left panel of Figure 1 to clearly show  $x_3 = 0.9$  rather than  $x_3 - 0.9$ .
2. Deleting the catch report for sardine in Appendix A.

While not requiring any changes to the text in the TOR, the SSC notes two cases where recent practice has not conformed with the TOR. The most recent multi-year projections for CPS have not increased sigma over the projection period. However, the SSC intends to do so in the future. Ideally, a CPS-specific rate of increase should be derived, but in the interim, rates derived for groundfish should be used. In addition, SSC members who were also Stock Assessment Review Panelists have not been recused from SSC reviews of recent assessments and will be recused in the future.

The SSC is supportive of developing a separate TOR for CPS rebuilding analyses. The SSC notes the request in public comment from Oceana to modify the TOR to require calculation of a maximum sustainable yield exploitation rate “ $E_{MSY}$ ” for Pacific sardine. This type of analysis is not straightforward and would likely require re-evaluation of the relationship between recruitment and an environmental variable as well as simulation to compute  $E_{MSY}$  as a function of the environmental variable. Given the changes in the assessment since the last update to the  $E_{MSY}$  formula, this would first require a proponent to propose a methodology review of the updated  $E_{MSY}$ , complete the analyses required, present results, and respond to potential requests for further analyses.