

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL CALIFORNIA QUILLBACK ROCKFISH  
ANALYSES AND ADOPT REBUILDING ANALYSIS

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the [Groundfish Subcommittee \(GFSC\) report](#) on the additional review of quillback rockfish in California. The GFSC convened on January 26, 2024 to discuss potential issues regarding the 2021 stock assessment and subsequent 2023 rebuilding analysis for quillback rockfish. Drs. Ray Hilborn and Mark Maunder presented several items for further consideration, including whether to fix or estimate key parameters (e.g., natural mortality, steepness, growth), the need to account for spatial closures, and whether and how to deal with declining recruitment deviations from 1990 to 2010. These issues were initially raised by Drs. Hilborn and Maunder during public comment at the November 2023 Council meeting.

This re-review adhered to a [Terms of Reference](#) (TOR) that was developed specifically for this meeting. Following more detailed presentations by Drs. Hilborn and Maunder, the GFSC concluded that the issues raised were considered as part of the 2021 stock assessment or not appropriate given the data limitations and TOR for data-moderate assessments at the time. Although Drs. Hilborn and Maunder identified important areas for potential improvement in future assessments, the GFSC did not find justification to reject the 2021 stock assessment or the 2023 rebuilding analysis. The GFSC concluded that a) the choices made by the stock assessment team (STAT) were consistent with the TORs that were in place when the assessment and rebuilding analyses were conducted or b) the data necessary to conduct additional analyses did not exist. The GFSC did not recommend modifications to the base model or additional sensitivity tests. The SSC acknowledges that areas for improvement will very likely be identified each time a stock assessment review is conducted, given additional scrutiny.

The SSC continues to recommend use of the 2021 stock assessment and the adoption of the 2023 rebuilding analysis for California quillback rockfish. The SSC also endorses the areas of future work identified in the GFSC report.

PFMC  
03/07/24