

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON STOCK ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR 2027-28

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) recommends the following for development for Terms of Reference (TOR) associated with the stock assessment review process for the 2027-2028 biennial cycle:

- Include one page, at-a-glance summaries for stock assessments but not TOR components consistent with the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) recommendation.
- Include criteria for changes in stock assessment type (“on ramps/off ramps”) consistent with the SSC recommendation.
- Keep executive summary content robust consistent with previous assessments.
- Include GAP-led appendix as living document with first iteration in November-December timeframe of even years (prior to pre-assessment workshops) and probable last iteration for inclusion in STAR panel report.
- Include risk tables as TOR component.
- Add alternative catch streams for potential use in management.

One-page summaries are useful and referenced by stakeholders. On/off ramps seem like there could be benefit, and the GAP is interested to see how this would look in practice and is supportive of their inclusion in the TOR. Executive summaries in past assessments have been informative for stakeholders, and the GAP could support format changes but would like to continue to see the same level of information as in previous stock assessments. The GAP understands there is interest in including risk tables in stock assessment documents. While we do not have opposition to this, the GAP continues to have concerns with their use in management and will provide further comments on the use of risk tables in setting harvest specifications under the Risk Management item (currently shaded for November 2026).

The GAP is very supportive of the development of a GAP-led appendix. Many fishermen are willing to support the effort and provide information from their vast experience and believe it could be valuable to help provide context to the data collected by the stock assessment team (STAT). The GAP agrees with the SSC that the first iteration should occur prior to the pre-assessment workshop. The GAP believes it could be a living document during the process culminating with the STAR panel.

While not proposed in Attachment 1, the GAP has previously recommended in June 2025 ([Agenda Item E.7.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, June 2025](#)) amending the TOR for stock assessments such that projections include scenarios with different levels of ACL attainment. The idea is that by “pre analyzing” different levels of ACL attainment at the time the projections are run, in future years the SSC could easily adjust the OFL/ABC/ACL for that stock based on which attainment scenario has ended up being correct in reality. This could provide some efficiencies by limiting the need for multiple catch only updates by already analyzing a range of attainments. Some years back, this concept was suggested by NMFS headquarters in response to Council Coordination Committee questions about ACL underages (see answer to Question 18, pp. 11-12). The agency

stated: “One potential way to examine impacts of ACL underages on stock abundance is through scenario planning within a stock assessment. For example, as part of the stock assessment process, the assessment model could be used to evaluate a wide range of ACL underages, resulting in ranges of OFL and ABC recommendations for each year within each scenario. This analysis could be summarized within the assessment report, and once actual catch levels are known, the SSC can use that information to make or revise their ABC recommendation.”

PFMC  
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