Stock Assessment Terms of Reference 2027-2028

Pacific Fishery Management Council

Garden Grove, California

November 2026

Council Tasks

Adopt:

- **A Terms of Reference for groundfish stock assessment review,**
- A Terms of Reference for groundfish rebuilding analyses, and
- A Terms of Reference for methodology reviews.

Council's June Motion

- Prepare one-page, at-a-glance summaries for stock assessments.
  - *Request relayed to the Science Centers.*
- Develop criteria for changes in stock assessment type
  - *Added and found in section 3.3.*
- Keep the executive summary content of the stock assessment documents robust and consistent with previous assessments
  - *Request relayed to Science Centers and STAT. Description of executive summary remains.*

Council's June Motion

- Develop a GAP-led appendix as living document with first iteration completed prior to the pre-assessment workshops.
  - *Added "GAP authored document" throughout the TOR for inclusion in the pre-assessment workshop and in the final stock assessment document.*
- Request that risk tables be prepared as part of the stock assessment.
  - *Added to the TOR with some general criteria; Appendix E.*
- Prepare alternative catch streams for potential use in management.
  - *Added to the TOR, Section 3.2.*

Additional Changes

- Streamlining of and clarity to text:
  - Better reflect the **chronological order** in which events occur throughout the process.
  - Streamlined the **role description of responsibilities and expectations**.
  - Formally added the **category designations** and expanded on the metrics used to describe the determination of category-specific sigmas.
  - Language to specify **who should be providing data**.
  - Adjustments to **allow for changes in model and analysis types** and not require the use of older models or methods.
- Appendices:
  - The stock assessment document has been adjusted to align with the **National Stock Assessment Guidelines**.

Additional Changes

- There are slight adjustments to **data deadlines to 13 weeks ahead of the STAR panel** and **TOR review deadline to 4 weeks ahead of the STAR panel**.

- **Removed the Groundfish Subcommittee Review meeting** prior to SSC review in September to limit redundant reviews.

- Stock assessment types were expanded to include **two different tracks**. All previous assessment types were categorized as **management track** assessments and a new category of assessment, **research track**, was created.

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