

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON PLANNING AND
NECESSARY ACTIONS FOR THE 2012 PACIFIC WHITING SEASON

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) discussed the updated Pacific whiting assessment (Agenda Item F.1.a, Supplemental (REVISED) Attachment 1) as well as the [Pacific Whiting Act of 2006](#) that establishes the process for implementing the Agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

At this meeting the Council is scheduled to provide guidance on the setting of the harvest level for Pacific whiting. This guidance will inform the Council representative (Mr. Phil Anderson) to the Joint Management Committee (JMC) in their deliberations. Further, there is language in the Act that describes the factors that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will take into account in the event that the JMC cannot reach consensus. One of the factors that NMFS must consider is the recommendations of the Council. With the newness of this process, we are unsure what the Council may wish to provide in terms of recommendations to the JMC and to the Secretary of Commerce.

If the Council wishes to consider any harvest specifications other than the default harvest policy of $F_{40\%}$ with a 40:10 adjustment, the GMT suggests consideration of Table e.5 in the executive summary of the updated assessment in conjunction with the decision table. This table provides a new view of the risk posed by the uncertainty in the model. That table lists the probability (i.e. relative risk) of being at or below different biomass reference points and the default harvest rate ($F_{40\%}$) in 2013 under various catch levels for 2012.

The Council may also wish to articulate any other factors they want to consider in setting the U.S. portion of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) in the event they want to recommend reducing harvest below 73.88 percent of the TAC (e.g. “to the extent necessary to address the rebuilding needs of other species.”- Sec 608 (a) of the Act).

PFMC
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