

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON BRIEFING ON AND
LIMITED ACTIONS FOR EMERGING ISSUES IN THE 2013-214 BIENNIAL
SPECIFICATIONS PROCESS

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed methods and estimates for overfishing limits (OFLs) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for lingcod North and South of 40°10' N Latitude (Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 1) and methods and OFL estimates for six species included in the "Other Fish" complex (Agenda Item F.2.a, Attachment 2). The SSC also discussed a supplemental document developed by the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) on skate and shark discard mortality. Mr. John Devore and Dr. Jason Cope were present to summarize materials and answer questions.

At the November 2011 meeting, the Council suggested shifting the lingcod management line from 42° to 40°10' N Latitude to address concerns raised by representatives of trawl industry. The revised estimates for lingcod OFLs, ABCs and annual catch limits (ACLs) were developed using proportions of lingcod North and South of 40°10', estimated from survey biomass by Dr. Owen Hamel, the author of the 2009 lingcod assessment. The SSC discussed methods used to estimate OFLs and agreed that they are conceptually sound and can be used for lingcod harvest specifications.

Dr. Jason Cope described methods used to estimate OFLs for six species in the "Other Fish" complex, previously lacking contribution OFL values for the 2013-2014 management cycle. OFLs for four species (Pacific grenadier, spotted ratfish, big skate and California skate) were calculated using survey biomass and maximum sustainable yield (MSY) harvest rate estimates, while OFLs for the other two species (cabezon in Washington and kelp greenling in Washington/Oregon) were estimated using previously accepted assessment models where additional catch was added to account for areas that were not included in the original assessment. The SSC endorses the methods and OFL estimates based on survey biomass and MSY harvest rates, although cautions that several strong assumptions were made. Further evaluation of the methods would require a review of background materials used to estimate OFLs, such as the meta-analyses of the ratio of the MSY harvest rate to natural mortality rate.

The SSC does not endorse the OFLs for cabezon in Washington and kelp greenling in Washington/Oregon estimated by modifying previous assessment models (adding extra catch), since the interplay between amounts of catch used in the model, model parameters and estimated OFLs was found to be counterintuitive, and further exploration is required to address this issue.

It should be noted that methods used to derive these OFL estimates are a short-term solution for the "Other Fish," since the complex is expected to be restructured during the next management cycle. The SSC recommends that the OFLs and ABCs for the "Other Fish" complex be set equal to the sum of the OFLs and ABCs for the species in the complex for which these values are available. The revised harvest specifications for "Other Fish" endorsed by the SSC to use in 2013-2014 cycle are provided in Table 1.

Finally, the SSC discussed the supplemental report provided by the GMT on discard mortality of longnose skate and spiny dogfish. Stock assessments for both species assume less than 100

percent discard mortality, and the GMT requested advice on whether management should follow assumptions used in stock assessments while calculating total mortality for these two species. The SSC recommends discard mortality assumptions be consistent between assessments and management. Although the discard mortality assumptions used in the assessments are based on very limited information, they represent the best information available. The SSC recommends that this information be used for management of these two species.

Table 1. Revised harvest specifications (in mt) for “Other Fish” complex.

Stock Complex	2013 OFL	2014 OFL	2013 ABC	2014 ABC	2012 ACL	PPA ACLs	
						2013	2014
Other Fish	6,832	6,802	4,717	4,697	5,575	4,717	4,697

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