

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
TRAWL RATIONALIZATION TRAILING ACTIONS AND
ALLOCATION AMENDMENTS AND ACTIONS

Mr. Jim Seger briefed the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) regarding a number of trawl rationalization trailing actions. The discussion focused largely on alternatives pertaining to use of multiple gears on a single trip. Gear combinations specified by these alternatives include small footrope and selective flatfish trawl gear (Alternative 1), multiple trawl gears (Alternative 2), and multiple trawl and fixed gear types (Alternative 3).

Due to differences in gear selectivity, it is important that catch data used in stock assessments be distinguished by gear type (i.e., midwater trawl, bottom trawl, fixed gear). To determine the effects of the multiple gear alternatives on stock assessments, the SSC recommends that the analysis include a discussion of whether existing data reporting provisions (e.g., split tickets) are adequate to ensure that harvest on single trips can be distinguished by gear type.

The SSC briefly discussed the potential changes in chafing gear and whiting season regulations. Neither was expected to be an issue for stock assessments.

An ongoing research issue with potential implications for ecosystem management pertains to effects of gear on habitat. Such research requires information on the spatial distribution of effort by gear type, which is typically obtained from logbook and observer data. To determine the effects of the multiple gear alternatives on ecosystem research, the SSC recommends that the analysis include a discussion of whether existing logbook and observer data requirements are adequate to ensure that effort on single trips can be distinguished by gear type as well as area.

With respect to the impacts of the gear alternatives on science, the SSC recommends that the analysis separate impacts on stock assessment science from impacts on ecosystem science.