

PACIFIC SARDINE STOCK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT FOR 2013, INCLUDING
PRELIMINARY EFP PROPOSALS AND TRIBAL SET-ASIDE

At this meeting, the Council will hear a report on the 2012 Pacific sardine stock assessment update, adopt harvest specifications and management measures for the 2013 Pacific sardine fishing season, consider a preliminary notice of intent to conduct exempted fishing permit (EFP) research, and will consider a sardine survey for potential inclusion in future stock assessments.

In October 2012, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) produced an updated stock assessment for Pacific sardine. The assessment was reviewed in early October by members of the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) subcommittee, which reported to the full SSC. Full assessments for CPS stocks typically occur every two to three years, with updates conducted in the intervening years, based on the same methodology and assessment protocols used for the previous full assessment. The Executive Summary of the 2012 assessment update is included as Agenda Item G.3.b, Assessment Report. The full report will be available electronically as Agenda Item G.3.b, Supplemental Assessment Report 2. The 2012 assessment update utilized new abundance data from four indices of relative abundance: the SWFSC's daily and total egg production estimates of spawning biomass off California, the industry-led aerial sardine survey (Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 6), and acoustic-trawl method (ATM) estimates of biomass along the west coast. The ATM estimates used survey data from the SWFSC's spring and summer surveys. The summer survey was a joint hake-sardine coastwide research cruise, covering the entire west coast from the Mexico border to the northern tip of Vancouver Island. In October 2012, the results of the surveys and the full stock assessment were reviewed.

At the November Council meeting, the SSC will review the Pacific sardine assessment and make an overfishing limit (OFL) recommendation on which to base management measures. The Council will consider a range of acceptable biological catch (ABC) levels associated with various P* (risk of overfishing) alternatives, and will establish harvest measures, including an annual catch limit (ACL) and an annual catch target (ACT). In making these decisions, the Council should consider the Quinault request for a sardine harvest allocation (Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 1), and the Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey, LLC notice of intent to conduct EFP research (Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 2). The prior year's EFP application is also included electronically (Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 3).

Finally, the Council will consider the West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) Trawl Sardine Survey for use in future stock assessments (Agenda Item G.3.a Attachment 4). The WCVI survey was reviewed by a methodology review panel in May 2012 (Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 5).

Council Action:

- 1. Approve the Pacific Sardine Assessment and Pacific sardine OFL.**

2. **Select P*, ABC, ACL and, if appropriate, ACT Specifications and Management Measures; Including Consideration of a Quinault Tribal Allocation, and EFP proposals.**
3. **Consider Approving the WCVI Survey for Use in Future Stock Assessment.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 1: Letter from Ed Johnstone, Quinault Fisheries Policy Spokesperson, regarding the Quinault Indian Nation's intent to establish a tribal allocation and to participate in the 2013 Pacific sardine fishery.
2. Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 2: Notice of Intent to conduct EFP research, from Northwest Sardine Survey, LLC.
3. Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 3: Final EFP proposal for 2012 activities, from Northwest Sardine Survey, LLC. *(Electronic only)*
4. Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 4: West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) Swept Area Trawl Survey Methodology. *(Electronic only)*
5. Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 5: WCVI Methodology Review Panel Report.
6. Agenda Item G.3.a, Attachment 6: Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey – Sampling Results in 2012. *(Electronic only)*
7. Agenda Item G.3.b, Assessment Report: *Executive Summary, Assessment of the Pacific Sardine Resource in 2012 for U.S. Management in 2013.*
8. Agenda Item G.3.b, Supplemental Assessment Report 2: *Assessment of the Pacific Sardine Resource in 2012 for U.S. Management in 2013. (Electronic only)*
9. Agenda Item G.3.d, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Survey and Assessment Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Approve West Coast Vancouver Island Survey for use in Future Stock Assessments; Review any Preliminary Proposals or Notice of Intent for EFPs in 2013; Adopt Final Pacific Sardine Stock Assessment and 2013 Management Measures.

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PFMC
10/17/12