



New England Fishery Management Council

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 John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 1, 2011
TO: Science and Statistical Committee
FROM: Paul Howard, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **SSC Meeting, June 14-15, 2011: Groundfish Discussion**

1. This fall the SSC will determine Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) for most groundfish stocks. Since most groundfish stocks will not be assessed this year, the Groundfish Plan Development Team is developing analytic techniques for developing ABC recommendations. The focus of these efforts is to attempt to identify metrics that can be used to verify that the stock size projected forward from the most recent assessment is reliable and can be used to develop catch advice. If this is not the case, then the PDT will identify how to make adjustments to the catch advice from the projections. The SSC will receive an update on the PDT's plans and progress at this meeting.

2. While the PDT work is preliminary, the SSC will be asked to provide guidance on several issues. These include:

- a. Assuming that a way to verify stock size is developed, does the SSC envision that adjustments to catch advice will be two-sided: that is, catches will be increased if the projection is determined to underestimate stock size and decreased if the projection over-estimates stock size? Or does the SSC expect that adjustments will be one-sided: catches will be reduced if the projection is believed to over-estimate stock size but will not be increased if the opposite is true?
- b. If projections are determined to be unreliable, are there specific ad hoc approaches for recommending ABC that the SSC wishes the PDT to explore?

3. The PDT is continuing work on the issues identified in the attached memos and additional information may be provided to the SSC at the meeting if it is completed.

Attachments:

- (1) Executive Committee meeting summary dated January 4, 2011; report of a meeting held January 4, 2011 (please note item 1 and the enclosures)
- (2) Augmented Groundfish Plan Development Team memo dated April 16, 2011; report of a conference call held April 7, 2011
- (3) Augmented Groundfish Plan Development Team memo dated May 31, 2011; report of a conference call held May 18, 2011.