

Role of Social Sciences in NEFMC SSC

Issues and Possibilities

Issue 1: Infrequent Social Science TOR

- SSC appointment is expertise driven
 - Yet few occasions where TOR would require social science expertise
 - Past three years
 - Review of MFI 6-month report on sector performance
 - Review of PDT model for impact analysis of groundfish ACLs
 - Review of NEFSC Social Sciences Branch recreational fishery economic model
- Past SSC recommendation to the Council to include social science information as part of ABC setting – not acted upon

Issue 2: SSC Quorum

- 18 appointees to the NEFMC SSC
 - 4 Social scientists (22% of membership)
 - 8 SSC members required for a quorum
 - Means that attendance by social scientists may be needed for a quorum
 - NOT a hypothetical (e.g. Scallop ABC)
 - Yet quorum by “body count” does a disservice to the Council

Issue 3: Lack of Critical Mass

- Social science expertise is not generic
 - Substantial number of sub-disciplines with own methods of inquiry
 - 4 SSC members to cover entire range of social science sub-disciplines

Possibilities: Issue 1

- Revisit SSC recommendation to the NEFMC that Social Science factors be included to inform ABC
 - Past inaction may be due to lack of guidance
 - Task social science SSC members to develop recommended approach
 - Ex – set of social and economic indicators (parsimonious), Industry reports used by MAFMC

MAFMC Approach

- Fishery information document
 - Prepared for industry advisors
 - Concise stock status
 - Fishery performance indicators
- Fishery advisory panel report
 - Narrative on contemporary fishing conditions
 - Market issues
 - Management issues/response to management
 - General fishing trends
 - Other issues

MAFMC Process (contd.)

- Advisory Panel report prepared prior to ABC recommendation
- Fishery information report and Advisory Panel report provided to SSC
- Assists SSC in interpreting data used in setting ABCs
 - May be most informative for data poor stocks

Possibilities: Issue 2

- Not recommending that every SSC meeting have a “token” social science TOR
 - Adopt a quorum standard based on expertise needed to address the TOR
 - If all TOR require biology expertise then base quorum on non-social science members.

Possibilities: Issue 3

- Temporary SSC membership based on expertise needed for TOR
 - E.g. the SASI model review
 - GOM Cod Recreational economic review
- Borrow expertise from other Council SSC
- Develop regional pool of expertise and draw from the pool as needed.