

NEFMC SSC REPORT

SEPTEMBER 24, 2013

Dr. Patrick J Sullivan

Vice-chair

NEFMC SSC

Overview

- American Plaice and GOM Cod Rebuilding Strategies
- Monkfish
- Haddock Spillover
- White Hake
- Red Crab
- Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder

American Plaice and GOM Cod Rebuilding Strategies – SSC Mtg May 16, 2013

- TOR: Review the 2012 assessments of American plaice and GOM cod and comment on the rebuilding strategies developed by the PDT based on the recent assessments and the rebuilding alternatives under development. The SSC is requested to advise on the technical basis for the range of alternatives that has been developed by the PDT.
- Implemented 5 years after current ABCs have passed
- Based on procedures outlined by PDT
- Plan developed so that recovery is projected within 10 year time frame with a focus on F rather than Biomass
- Constant vs. time varying F strategies considered
 - Perhaps with a control rule for bounding year-to-year change
- Pay attention to metrics beyond biomass
 - e.g. stock structure, especially age composition
- Consider mixed stock consequences as well

Monkfish Biological Reference Points

– SSC Mtg May 16, 2013

- TOR1: Review information provided by the Monkfish Plan Development Team (PDT) in response to request from the SSC.
- TOR2: Specify OFLs and develop ABC recommendations for both the northern and southern management areas for fishing years 2014-2016. ABC recommendations should be provided under the current control rule and under any new control rule that the SSC might recommend.
- Acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the two monkfish stocks remains at the status quo levels of 7,592mt for the northern stock and 12,316mt for the southern stock.
- The overfishing limits (OFL) for the two monkfish stocks are updated to 17,805mt for the northern stock and 23,204mt for the southern stock.
- The accuracy of age estimates for monkfish remains the most significant concern, and a new benchmark assessment should be conducted when and if new information comes to light that changes our perception of the life history of the species.
- The rationale for the ABC control rule currently in place, originally intended as an interim approach, should be revisited and possibly revised.

Haddock Spillover GB and GOM

-- SSC Mtg May 16, 2013

- TOR1: Review the work of the Groundfish PDT on the haddock spillover issue.
- TOR2: The SSC should address whether they agree or disagree with the PDT consensus statement on the issue. If the SSC disagrees, the SSC should
 - Provide an estimate of the amount of spillover when large year classes of GB haddock occur.
 - Provide suggestions as to how the anticipated spill-over of the strong 2010 year class can be used to adjust the GOM haddock ABC for FY 2013, 2014, and 2015
- Definitions? Normal movement. High density expansion.
- Exchange rates not well defined. 10% suggested in literature. Local vs. stockwide in question.
- Expansion not evident in 2003 strong year class
- No scientific basis for adjusting haddock ACLs
- Suggest a systematic risk evaluation

White Hake OFL and ABC

– SSC Mtg August 20, 2013

- TOR: Review the assessment and work of the Groundfish PDT and provide an OFL and an ABC for each year for FY 2014-2016 that will prevent overfishing and is consistent with the default control rule.
- Acceptable biological catches (ABCs) for white hake are 4,642mt for 2014, 4,713mt for 2015, and 4,645 mtfor 2016.
- Overfishing limits (OFLs) are 6,082mt for 2014, 6,237 for 2015, and 6,314 for 2016.

Red Crab Interim Control Rule

-- SSC Mtg August 21, 2013

- TOR1: Review red crab landings, discard and discard data and analyses provided by the Red Crab Plan Development Team (PDT).
- TOR2: Review interim acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rule for and develop ABC recommendations for fishing years 2014-2016.
- ABC for the red crab fishery remains at the status quo level of 1775mt.
- The OFL for the red crab fishery remains unknown given the data-poor nature of the assessment.
- Market constraints on the catch of red crab need to be analyzed and communicated more systematically (to the extent that proprietary restrictions will allow in a small fleet) since these have been proposed as the major reason landings are consistently below the ABC.
- Discard rates and trends should continue to be analyzed, in particular to determine if a seemingly increasing trend is primarily due to more thorough reporting as opposed to a biological explanation.
- The effects of harvest on the sex ratio and sex-specific size structure of the stock, and the implications of those effects, should be more thoroughly investigated, consistent with requests from the industry to revisit the male-only harvest strategy.

Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder OFL and ABC – SSC Mtg August 21, 2013

- TOR: Provide an OFL and an ABC for each year for FY 2014-2015 that will meet management objectives and prevent overfishing.
- Acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder for FY 2014-2015 should not exceed 500mt, and catch should be reduced as much as practicable.
- The overfishing limit (OFL) for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder remains unknown.
- A more thorough scientific examination of the processes determining productivity of the Georges Bank yellowtail flounder stock and more robust analytical tools for determining its status and developing management measures is needed.