

E1 STAFF TASKING

MOTION ON D2

February 6, 2017

D2 Motion on Stock Assessment Prioritization.

1. I move that the Council recommend a conditional implementation of the stock assessment prioritization process. The Council remains concerned about any use of this prioritization process to allocate stock assessment resources between regions or to modify the timetable or extent of stock surveys. For that reason, the Council requests that the agency describe how it prioritizes stock assessment funding relative to other fishery research efforts, prior to the AFSC proceeding with the second year of the prioritization process. Additionally, the Council also requests updates on efforts being undertaken nationally to improve the efficiency of stock assessments.
2. The Council endorses the SSC's recommendations on stock assessment prioritization regarding the frequency and format of stock assessments, as well as their recommendations for further review and timely Plan Team development of an evaluation tool for measuring the costs and benefits of alternative assessment frequencies and a framework for risk assessment, prior to the AFSC proceeding with the second year of the prioritization process.
3. For purposes of evaluating this modification to our stock assessment process, the Council defines success, for alternative assessment frequencies, as follows:
A reduction in the frequency of some targeted stock assessments should provide increased opportunity for stock assessment authors to address analytical priorities (listed below) that have been awaiting attention, while avoiding any measurable decrease in the precision of assessment based products such as OFL and ABC.
4. A review of the degree of success achieved through the proposed target frequencies will be conducted after one complete cycle (4 years) of the modified assessment schedule.

Itemized Analytical Priorities (Initial list, to be refined by the Plan Teams during their 2017 meetings, and then be re-reviewed by the SSC and Council)

- Development and testing of Next Generation Stock Assessment methods including: climate-enhanced stock assessment models, multi-species models, and advanced analytical modeling approaches.
- Improved short- and long-term projection models to be used to evaluate the performance of alternative management strategies (e.g., MSEs). This might include evaluations of techniques to formally incorporate uncertainty based buffers for tier 3 stocks and strategies for addressing "choke" species' stock status including PSC caps.
- More rapid progress on innovative decision tables or decision theoretic approaches to management, including techniques for testing the utility of ensemble modeling approaches to groundfish management.
- Research to resolve specific modeling issues such as survey catchability, ideal sample sizes for core data sets.