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Alaska Fisheries
Science Center

Report of the November 2017 Joint Groundfish Plan Team meeting

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December 8, 2017

Meeting overview

- Dates: November 13-14
- Place: AFSC Seattle lab
- Leaders: Dana Hanselman (BSAI co-chair), Grant Thompson (BSAI co-chair), Diana Stram (BSAI coordinator), Jon Heifetz (GOA co-chair), Jim Ianelli (GOA co-chair), Jim Armstrong (GOA coordinator)
- Participation: 24 Team members present, plus numerous AFSC and AKRO staff and members of the public

Assessment schedule (1 of 2)

Stock/complex	Type	Tier(s)	Frequency	Next full
Eastern Bering Sea pollock	Full	1	1	2018
Bogoslof Island Pollock	None	5	2	2018
Aleutian Islands pollock	Partial	3	2	2018
Eastern Bering Sea Pacific Cod	Full	3	1	2018
Aleutian Islands Pacific cod	Full	5	1	2018
Sablefish	Full	3	1	2018
Yellowfin sole	Full	1	1	2018
Greenland Turbot	Partial	3	2	2018
Arrowtooth flounder	Partial	3	2	2018
Kamchatka flounder	Partial	3	2	2018
Northern Rock sole	Partial	1	2	2018
Flathead sole	Partial	3	2	2018
Alaska plaice	Full	3	2	2019
Other flatfish	None	5	4	2020

Assessment schedule (2 of 2)

Stock/complex	Type	Tier(s)	Frequency	Next full
Pacific ocean perch	Partial	3	2	2018
Northern rockfish	Partial	3	2	2019
Rougheye & blackspotted rockfish	Partial	3	2	2018
Shortraker rockfish	None	5	2	2018
Other rockfish	None	5	2	2018
Atka mackerel	Full	3	1	2018
Squid	None	6	2	2018
Skates	Partial	3/5	2	2018
Sharks	None	5	2	2018
Octopus	None	6	2	2018
Sculpins	Partial	5	4	2019
Forage Species	Report	Eco	2	2019
Grenadiers (BSAI/GOA)	None	Eco	4	2020

GOA GF assessment issues

New assessment cycle
(page 11 of GOA intro)

Revised Stock Assessment Schedule

Based on consideration of stock prioritization including assessment methods and data availability, some stocks are assessed on an annual basis while others are assessed less frequently. The following table provides an overview of the level of assessment presented in this year's SAFE report, the Tier level and schedule, as well as the year of the next full assessment by stock.

Stock Assessment schedule for the Gulf of Alaska

Stock	2017			
	Assessment status	Tier	Schedule (years)	Year of next Full Assessment
Pollock	Full	3	1	2018
Pacific cod	Full	3	1	2018
Sablefish	Full	3	1	2018
Northern and southern rock sole	Full	3	4	2021
Shallow water flatfish	Full	5	4	2021
Deepwater flatfish (Dover)	Partial	3/6	4	2019
Rex sole	Full	5	4	2021
Arrowtooth flounder	Full	3	2	2019
Flathead sole	Full	3	4	2021
Pacific ocean perch	Full	3	2	2019
Northern rockfish	Partial	3	2	2018
Shortraker rockfish	Full	5	2	2019
Other rockfish	Full	4/5/6	2	2019
Rougheye & blackspotted rockfish	Full	3	2	2019
Dusky rockfish	Partial	3	2	2018
Demersal shelf rockfish	Partial*	4/6	2	2018
Thornyheads	Partial*	5	2	2018
Atka mackerel	Full	6	2	2019
Octopus	Full	6	2	2019
Skates	Full	5	2	2019
Sculpins	Full	5	4	2021
Sharks	None	6	2	2018
Squid	Full	6	2	2019
Forage species	None	eco	2	2018
Grenadiers (BSAI/GOA)	None	eco	4	2020

* Annual assessment schedule

Assessment analysis planning

Analyses, suggested for change in assessment cycle:

1. OFL-to-ABC buffers
2. Costs and benefits of changes in target frequency
3. A more quantitative evaluation risks to GOA flatfish stocks

Reviewed history of changes to assessment cycles

2004 (14 assessments in GOA)

2005 (9 assessments in BSAI)

2012 (3 BSAI assessments)

2017 13 assessments (5 BSAI, 7 GOA, 1 both)

Criteria: low catch/ABC ratio, stable, no conservation concern

Analysis: national prioritization protocol underwent multiple rounds of review, all authors completed extensive questionnaire, discussion paper, 2 day Joint Team meeting

Assessment analysis planning





- Request clarification from the SSC regarding the scope of the three analyses requested
- Recommend a workshop with Groundfish Plan Teams, the Social Science Planning Team, the SSC, and authors to discuss costs and benefits of different assessment frequencies and other analyses

SSC request regarding indications of an impending stock decline

1. "The SSC recommends that, for those sets of environmental and fisheries observations that support the inference of an impending severe decline in stock biomass, the issue of concern be brought to the SSC, with an integrated analysis of the indices involved."
 - "To be of greatest value, to the extent possible this information should be presented at the October Council meeting so that there is sufficient time for the Plan Teams and industry to react to the possible reduction in fishing opportunity."
2. "The SSC also recommends explicit consideration and documentation of ecosystem and stock assessment status for each stock, perhaps following the framework suggested below, during the December Council meeting to aid in identifying areas of concern."

SSC request regarding indications of an impending stock decline

Sample table

		Stock Assessment status	
			
Ecosystem Assessment status		2006 EBS Pollock	2016 EBS Pollock
		"No red flags were indicated."	EBS Yellowfin sole

SSC request regarding indications of an impending stock decline

Some questions regarding task #1:

- **Who**
 - will make the determination that...observations “support the inference of an impending severe decline in stock biomass?”
- What form should the “integrated analysis” take?
- Who should conduct the integrated analysis?

SSC request regarding indications of an impending stock decline

- Discussion on this topic included the feasibility/need to connect individual assessments to the ecosystem information in the ESRs
- Recommend a workgroup (in conjunction with FEP team) that will develop a process for responding to the SSC recommendation including addressing the questions and issues identified in these minutes