

Total Catch Accounting Working Group

Groundfish Plan Teams

November 3, 2010, 9 – 10 am

Participants:

Plan Teams: Jane DiCosimo (NPFMC), Mary Furuness (NMFS AKRO), Tom Pearson (NMFS AKRO), Chris Lunsford (NMFS AFSC), Sarah Gaichas (NMFS AFSC), Dave Carlile (ADF&G), Kristen Green (ADF&G), Nick Sagalkin (ADF&G), Bill Clark (IPHC)

Invited: Bob Ryznar (AKFIN), Michael Fey (AKFIN), Scott Meyer (ADF&G), Lee Hulbert (ADF&G), Jason Gasper (NMFS AKRO), Heather Gilroy (IPHC)

Jane DiCosimo summarized the background on how and why the group was created. Total catch accounting (TCA) for all groundfish stocks that are managed under the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMPs is now required under annual catch limits (ACLs) and associated requirements. In September 2010, NMFS AKRO staff reported on progress towards compiling a comprehensive database for use by stock assessment authors to account for total removals. Federal and state commercial harvests and state sport and subsistence harvests have been compiled; however, compilation of research (survey) data is incomplete due to some technical issues related to incomplete data for converting numbers of fish to pounds. During a discussion of the status of TCA with the Plan Team, a working group was requested to address outstanding issues so that use of the database would be ready for the stock assessments for determining the 2012 ACLs.

Mary Furuness reviewed the status of data collection for TCA. She provided a list of data categories for inclusion in the database (attached). Participants discussed the status of the different sector databases and the collective interest in housing the TCA database with AKFIN. AKFIN already pulls in data from the Catch Accounting System, CFEC, and ADF&G. Bob Ryznar described the dual levels of access: Users are able to directly access the database for their own queries and a summary table can be created to produce a standard of queried data.

The group focused on several issues:

- 1) Survey data
 - a) conversions from numbers to lb
 - b) Time period for historical data
- 2) Inside State waters harvests
- 3) Report out to Plan Teams

Survey data

Chris Lunsford led a discussion of attempts to integrate survey data in TCA regarding two technical issues: 1) historical time period and 2) converting numbers to pounds.

Conversions: Jason Gasper reported that the NMFS-AKRO regularly converts crab survey numbers to pounds for monitoring incidental catch. Scott Meyer reported ADF&G Sportfish Division collects size data and has provided sport harvests converted to pounds for rockfish, cod, sablefish, and sharks. Sarah Gaichas suggested that the Observer Program could provide size data from their catch sampling for converting survey data to pounds. **The group recommended that a subgroup be formed to develop draft conversion protocols for incomplete (size data) data sets. Chris Lunsford, Jason Gasper, Sarah Gaichas, Jennifer Mondragon, and Heather Gilroy agreed to work on this issue and report to the group at its next meeting.**

Historical Data Mary Furuness noted that the requirements for TCA begin in 2011, even though it might be preferable to account for historical total removals. Reliable estimates of halibut bycatch data go back to 1998, reliable estimates of commercial data go back to 1991, and the stock assessments go back to 1977. The group noted this was not a technical issue, **but the question of what historical time period should be covered under TCA should be referred to policy makers.**

State waters

The group discussed several inside water fisheries (e.g., Chatham sablefish, PWS pollock, SEO DSR, Pacific cod) and whether they are included in assessment for federal groundfish “stocks.” Dave Carlile asked if state inside water harvests should be included in estimates of TCA. Bill Clark suggested that inside and outside waters could be treated as separate stocks. He reported that while the IPHC treats Pacific halibut throughout its entire range as one stock, there is no apparent biological harm to groundfish under the current (ad hoc) approach. Stock definitions are addressed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The working group concluded that **inside water harvests should not be included in TCA since those populations are not included in the biomass estimate in the stock assessments.** The group discussed how stocks are defined in the groundfish FMPS and SAFE Reports and concluded that the group should inventory cases when inside water populations do and do not factor into federal stock assessments. Dave Carlile recommended that an information matrix of all sources of mortality be prepared by the group. This information will assist the group in recommending approaches for developing the TCA database. Dave Carlile will coordinate the State of Alaska contributions and Mary Furuness will coordinate the NMFS contributions to the inventory. Bob Ryznar will assist with organizing the inventory fields. A draft inventory will be reviewed by the working group at its next meeting.

Process for database development

Mary Furuness is the lead for contributing federal data. Dave Carlile is the lead for State data. Bob Ryznar is the lead for housing and developing the database. Bill Clark recommended that original data (including numbers and weights as some models internally generate weights) be included in the database (not just summary data). Scott Meyer recommended that metadata be included. Nick Sagalkin

asked about the frequency and timing of database updates. Chris Lunsford identified that stock assessment authors need access to the data each fall for development of their models. The group recommended that the entire dataset be updated, when appropriate, rather than just adding the most recent year's data, to account for any data revisions. The general rule for annual data submission will be flexible. Chris Lunsford noted that the database must account for different statistical areas, species codes, etc. used by the agencies.

Reporting

The TCA working group will meet again by teleconference on February 9, 10, or 11, 2011 (TBA) to review sub-group reports on conversion methodologies and the stock inventory. Those sub-groups will meet independently and are open to additional participants than those identified in this report.

Total groundfish accounting from all sources of removals (Source: M. Furuness)

Repository: AKFIN

Sources of mortality:

1. Commercial fisheries
 - a. State GHF fisheries –fish ticket
 - b. Federal groundfish fisheries – catch accounting system
 - c. IPHC – fish ticket
2. Surveys
 - a. State
 - b. Federal
 - c. IPHC
3. Research
 - a. Federal – Scientific research permit, Exempted fishing permit, Letter of Acknowledgement
 - b. State
 - c. IPHC
4. Recreational
 - a. State – Pacific cod, sablefish, rockfish, sharks
5. Subsistence/personal use
 - a. State
6. Bycatch in halibut fishery
 - a. State/Federal – fish ticket/catch accounting system
 - b. HFICE working group
7. Pacific cod in crab fisheries
 - a. State – fish ticket