



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

605 W. 4th Ave. Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 271-2809
Fax (907) 271-2817

Action Memo

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Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
Stock Assessment Prioritization

STAFF CONTACT: Jim Armstrong

ACTION REQUIRED:
Review Plan Team Recommendations on Assessment Frequency

BACKGROUND:
In response to Council direction and in the context of the national stock assessment prioritization plan (Item 2) and its local application (Item 3), the groundfish plan teams convened a special meeting on Jan 11-12 at the AFSC in Seattle to develop recommendations relative to Council objectives. The Joint Plan Team (JPT) report is attached.

The Stock Assessment Prioritization Paper generated target frequencies for conducting assessments and "Scenario 4" was selected by the JPT for evaluation relative to status quo frequency. The JPT discussed the relevant issues and developed rationales considering: 1) alignment with survey frequencies, 2) low Catch/ABC ratio, 3) a current management concerns, and/or 4) the relative stability of abundance estimates across years. Where author recommendations, status quo, and scenario 4 were consistent, the Teams recommended no change in assessment frequency. Additionally, the JPT recommended how to proceed during stock assessment "off-years" to ensure that stocks would be appropriately monitored.

The JPT recommended decreasing the frequency of stock assessment for 13 stocks. One annual assessment (Greenland turbot) was recommended to become 2 years, one annual assessment (AI pollock) was recommended to become 4 years, and the remaining 11 stocks changed from 2-year to 4-year frequencies.

Two other main outcomes/recommendations from the meeting were:

- 1) To revisit assessment frequency again (say after 5 years) for evaluation recognizing that special requests and cases may cause for changes in assessment frequency;
- 2) To emphasize the importance to maintain (or increase) survey frequency and other multi-species data collection programs. The frequency of SAFE report chapter production was considered assuming the current level of fishery independent survey sampling effort.