



D2 Sablefish Apportionment Workshop - Report (SSC only)

June 2020 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Dr. Diana Stram, Sam Cunningham
Other Presenter: Kari Fenske, AFSC
Action Required: Discuss methodology for sablefish apportionment to be analyzed and included in the fall 2020 sablefish assessment

BACKGROUND

At this meeting, the SSC will review reports on methods and preliminary results from a series of ongoing simulation analyses to examine the performance of several alternative apportionment strategies for sablefish across management areas. Sablefish (*Anoplopoma fimbria*) in Alaska are managed as one stock because movement rates among management regions are high and exploitation rates are relatively low. Each year the sablefish stock assessment model estimates ABC and OFL values, and ABC is subsequently apportioned among six management areas (Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea, Western GOA, Central GOA, West Yakutat, and East Yakutat/Southeast Outside). Beginning in December 1999, the Council apportioned the 2000 ABC and OFL based on a 5-year exponential weighting of the fishery and survey abundance indices. This apportionment method was used from 2000-2013. In 2014, apportionments were fixed at the 2013 proportions because the objective of reducing variability in apportionment was not being achieved using the 5-year exponential weighting method.

In 2019, the SSC recommended that the OFL for sablefish be managed as a single OFL across both the GOA and BSAI given that it is considered a single stock across FMP areas. The Plan Teams and SSC have recommended that alternative apportionment strategies be considered in the stock assessment to move away from the fixed apportionment scheme. On February 20, 2020, AFSC hosted a meeting at Auke Bay Laboratories in Juneau (in person and via webinar) to describe the preliminary results and provide an opportunity for input on the analytical process. The meeting was attended by stakeholders and staff from the AFSC, AKRO, and NPFMC. The meeting was successful in gathering feedback that identified four primary, and potentially conflicting, areas of concern about apportionment for consideration by the authors. The attached reports address: 1) the methodology for the simulation analyses, and 2) preliminary results and feedback on apportionment schemes from the meeting.

The SSC will review the simulation methods, analyses, and feedback and make recommendations regarding the methodology for the apportionment strategies to be analyzed and included in the fall 2020 sablefish assessment.