



D4 Comments on the NS1 Technical Guidance on ABC Control Rule Provisions (SSC Only)

Action Memo

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Action Required: Review comments from SSC subgroup and provide recommendations as needed

BACKGROUND

Revisions to the National Standard 1 (NS1) guidelines published in 2016 included two provisions that added flexibility in the process of specifying annual catch limits (ACLs). One provision allowed the unused portion of an ACL to be carried over to the following year. A second provision allowed changes in catch limits to be phased in over a period of time not to exceed 3 years. Both provisions maintain the requirement to prevent overfishing. The added flexibility may have a number of benefits including increasing safety and economic performance and reducing social disruptions by creating stability in harvests over time. However, policies that allow acceptable biological catch (ABC) to be set closer to the overfishing limit (OFL) also have the potential to increase biological risk and should be properly analyzed and adopted with caution. A technical memo has been drafted to support the implementation of the carry-over and phase-in provisions as described within the NS1 guidelines.

The SSC will review these proposed changes and provide recommendations to the Council.