
ACLS, AM, APPORTIONMENT, SPATIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY



RECENT ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS (ACLS)

OFL: catch level that corresponds to the stock's maximum sustainable yield

- Catch > OFL = overfishing

For 2020, the **SSC set the OFL statewide to represent the overall area of the stock boundary.**

- No biological reasoning indicating further stock structure separation is needed

ABC: Buffer downward from OFL to account for scientific uncertainty.

- **maxABC prescribed by our GF Tier system control rules**

ACL = ABC (at spatial scale of OFL)

Overall in 2019: Catch > GOA + BSAI ABC (ACL).

Alaska-wide ACL/ABC exceeded by 1,487 t (10% but still ~ 50% of OFL)

2020 Sablefish ACL = Area-wide ABC (BSAI +GOA)

ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES (AM)

- NS1 guidelines: accountability measures (AM) should prevent exceedances of ACLs and correct or mitigate overages of the ACL if they occur.
- BSAI and GOA FMPs reference the following components as AMs
 - Observer coverage
 - Catch accounting
 - In-season management authority
 - Harvest specifications

ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES (AM)

December 2019: Council noted (clarified in February 2020 as AMs): in response to concerns regarding the ABC (and therefore ACL) overage in both GOA and BSAI (clarified in February 2020 as AMs):

1. TAC in AI set < ABC (normally TAC = ABC)
2. The trawl fleet cautioned to avoid incidental catches of sablefish in 2020 with a scheduled potential action to follow by Council 2020 on sablefish discards
3. The Council acknowledged that the SSC set the OFL statewide to represent the overall area of the stock boundary. As the ACL is assessed at the level of the overall stock (and thus the spatial area over which the OFL is specified) it is highly unlikely than an overage of the overall Areawide ABC (ACL) would occur in 2020.
4. The sablefish stock biomass is increasing and the overage in 2019 is unlikely to represent a conservation concern requiring additional actions by the Council outside of those already taken during the December specifications process.

NPFMC SPATIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

- 1) As soon as preliminary scientific information indicates that further stock structure separation or other spatial management measures may be considered, the stock assessment authors, plan teams (groundfish, crab, scallop), and SSC should advise the Council of their findings and any associated conservation concerns.
- 2) With input from the agency, the public, and its advisory bodies, the Council (and NMFS) should identify the economic, social, and management implications and potential options for management response to these findings and identify the suite of tools that could be used to achieve conservation and management goals. In the case of crab and scallop management, ADF&G needs to be part of this process.
- 3) To the extent practicable, further refinement of stock structure or other spatial conservation concerns and potential management responses should be discussed through the process described in recommendations 1 and 2 above.
- 4) Based on the best information available provided through this process, the SSC should continue to recommend OFLs and ABCs that prevent overfishing of stocks.

NPFMC SPATIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

- 1) **As soon as preliminary scientific information indicates that further stock structure separation or other spatial management measures may be considered**, the stock assessment authors, plan teams (groundfish, crab, scallop), and SSC should advise the Council of their findings and any associated conservation concerns.
 - Given lack of stock structure separation leading to single OFL are there spatial catch and conservation concerns?
 - If so, are these related to additional research priorities?
 - Or, are there conservation concerns that the Teams wish to raise to the SSC as it relates to the Spatial Management Policy (Step 1)?

1999 SPECIFICATIONS DECISIONS ON APPORTIONMENT

- **1999 Sablefish Assessment:**
- Assessment authors per requests from industry considered both their status quo apportionment (5 year exponentially weighted survey average) as well as a range of ways (both using fixed and moving averages) to include both survey and fishery data to apportion across BSAI and GOA.
- Assessment then provided the following statement (on the differences between the alternative combined fishery/survey methods considered) while the assessment moved forward with the 5 yr exponentially weighted survey apportionment:

Since sablefish are considered to be one population in Alaska, this analysis implies that it does not matter in what area they're harvested, as long as fishing mortality rates do not greatly differ between areas. Thus as assessment authors, we have no recommendation on which of these three apportionment methods should be used.

JPT/SSC/COUNCIL DECISIONS

- The Joint Plan Team reviewed alternative apportionment methods but continued to recommend the 5 yr exponentially weighted method for apportionment noting concerns with both increased variability with use of fishery data and the introduction of potential bias due to changing fishery catchability and non-random distribution of fishing effort.
- The SSC concurred with the Joint Plan Team.
- The Council in December modified the apportionment in their motion adopting specs to use the weighted (2/3) survey (1/3) fishery data to apportion sablefish (only). They noted that the PT and Council should review this apportionment annually to ensure the health of the stock is not compromised, nor that inappropriate bias is introduced.
- Employed this method until 2013 after which the Teams and SSC recommended the apportionment be frozen pending further analysis
 - Concerns noted with lack of recruitment and lack of good data in western areas where > quotas were being allocated.

