

C3 Sablefish

AP Motion 3

The AP recommends the sablefish stock assessment team explore additional stock assessment models and methods not limited to 25.12_1Reg_Cont (Status Quo), 26.1_1reg and 26.2_FAA for the November Joint Groundfish Plan Team and December Council meetings.

The AP recommends the Sablefish stock assessment team explore the following models:

1. Model 26.1_1Reg with carryover apportionment.
2. A three year phase in of the 26.2 FAA model and how it would be apportioned through all regions (AI, BS, WGOA, CGOA, WYAK, SEO).
3. Model 26.2_FAA with domed selectivity for the model and the survey for the Bering Sea.
4. A sensitivity run that uses the M value from 26.1_1Reg in model 26.2_FAA.

Finally, the AP supports reestablishment of comprehensive annual surveys for this valuable stock and the use of commercial size composition and CPUE data.

Motion passed 18-0

Rationale in Support of Motion

- *The AP acknowledged and discussed the potential changes to the model used in the coastwide sablefish stock assessment, which comes as the result of a change in the sablefish longline survey design and a CIE review that was conducted. They specifically noted the Joint Plan Team minutes, which mentioned that there currently is no biological concern for the stock and there is evidence pointing towards continued strong recruitment classes.*
- *Due to the significant potential reductions in coastwide sablefish ABC under these new models (ranging from an 18% reduction under Model 26.1 to a 32% reduction under 26.2_FAA), the AP noted that there has been a large outcry by sablefish stakeholders of all sectors in opposition to the new proposed models.*
- *The AP felt the recommendations included in this motion are responsive to the public testimony as well as recommendations that came out of the SSC, noting specifically that the first two model frameworks listed came from stakeholder recommendations in written and public testimony and the third and fourth recommendations came from SSC deliberation.*
 - *The first model option would reintegrate carryover data from the non surveyed region into the modeling framework.*
 - *The second model option would look at a way to phase in the proposed 26.2 FAA model over several years, rather than taking the 32% coastwide reduction in a single year.*
 - *The third option would be able to more specifically model sablefish population trends that are more region specific that do not fit a Coastwide trend model.*
 - *The fourth model option would allow for an understanding of the treatment of M in both of the new models relative to other changes between the two models.*

- *AP members recognized that an AP request for new model parameters outside of SSC recommendations is not common practice, but that the unprecedented ABC reduction without a biological concern warranted an expanded look at the options to minimize sudden impact to stakeholders.*
- *An AP member noted that the proposed reductions are of such a significant scale, that if they were to be implemented without a phase in, it could force the processing sector to have to make determinations about opening smaller seasonal processing locations which could further disadvantage harvesters.*
- *An AP member expressed concern with supplementing judgement on scientific recommendations but noted the need for better communication regarding the model changes and resulting decline in harvest levels. They expressed concern regarding public trust in science when such dramatic changes happened without adequate outreach.*