Southern Demersal Working Group (SDWG)

SAW 47 - Summer Flounder Assessment Preparation Schedule

Assessment Task Assignment Meeting (#1), for SDWG
Conference Call - November 27, 2007 10:00am
Contact Jessica Coakley (SDWG chair) at the
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council office for details
(302) 674-2331 or jcoakley@mafmc.org

Assessment Methodology Meeting (#2), for SDWG
NEFSC, Woods Hole.
Week of Feb. 11, 2008 (Exact dates/times TBD)

Assessment and Modeling Updates (#3), for SDWG
NEFSC, Woods Hole.
Week of April 14, 2008 (Exact dates/times TBD)

Final Meeting (#4), for SDWG
NEFSC, Woods Hole.
Week of May 19, 2008 (Exact dates/times TBD)

47th SAW/SARC will be held week of June 16, 2008
NEFSC, Woods Hole MA
Stock: Summer flounder.

Draft TORs for the Assessment

DRAFT TORs for SAW/SARC-47 in June, 2008

(Last Revised: Sept. 27, 2007)

Summer flounder

1. Characterize the commercial and recreational catch, effort and CPUE, including descriptions of landings, discards and discard mortality.

2. Review methods for using fishery-independent surveys as abundance indices in assessment models.

   a. Evaluate whether to combine several of the surveys into a composite survey index. If appropriate, implement this approach.

b. Develop and implement an appropriate statistical method to account for the probability of observing zeros in NEFSC survey tows.

3. Evaluate the feasibility of implementing alternative approaches to assess status of summer flounder stock and comment on any potential effects on estimates of F, SSB, and BRPs. Alternative approaches could consider:

   a. Separate Catch at age matrices for commercial and recreational fisheries, and resulting partial recruitment vectors for each fishery.

   b. Regional differences (north, south) in catch at age matrices.

   c. Potential gender differences in life span, growth rate, and natural mortality and implications of these factors for observed age- and length-specific sex ratios.

   d. Strength of evidence for natural mortality rate used in the assessment; Update the estimate if appropriate.

4. Compare results from alternative modeling approaches with those from the VPA model, to evaluate the robustness of VPA model results. Perform retrospective analyses of F, SSB, and recruitment for the models, and describe potential effects of retrospective patterns on assessment and rebuilding.

5. Based on the "best" model or models, estimate fishing mortality rate, recruitment, spawning stock biomass, and total stock biomass for the current year and characterize the uncertainty of those estimates. If possible, also include estimates for earlier years with uncertainty estimates.

6. Examine and evaluate the role of the environment on past and present summer flounder recruitment success.

7. Biological Reference Points

   a. Update or redefine biological reference points (BRPs; proxies for B_{MSY} and F_{MSY}), taking into account conclusions from earlier assessments and findings from TOR 6 (i.e., recruitment and the environment). Estimate uncertainty in BRPs. Comment on the scientific adequacy of existing and redefined BRPs.

   b. Evaluate current stock status with respect to the existing BRPs, as well as with respect to updated or redefined BRPs (from TOR 7a).

8. Stock Projections

   a. Recommend what modeling approaches and data should be used for conducting single and multi-year stock projections, computing TACs or TALs, and measures of uncertainty.

b. If possible,

i. Provide numerical examples of short term projections (2-3 years) of biomass and fishing mortality rate, and characterize their uncertainty, under various TAC/F strategies and

ii. Compare projected stock status to existing rebuilding or recovery schedules, as appropriate.

9. Review, evaluate and report on the status of the Research Recommendations offered in recent SARC reviewed assessments and in the 2006 “Methot” Review.

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