JMC Closed Session Meetings  
Summary Report  
September 23, 2020

NOTE: This document is a collection of thoughts and opinions expressed during the JMC closed meetings, held via webinar/conference call on July 31 and August 21, 2020.

1) Incorporating New Science into the Process

The JMC discussed how new science information could potentially be considered in the process, including fisheries science and other related science. For example, it was noted that information presented by Canada during the March 2020 JMC meeting resulted in considerable discussion regarding future stock abundance outside of the stock assessment developed by the JTC and approved by the SRG.

It was agreed that new science should be vetted by the JTC and SRG before being considered by the JMC and AP. A three-step process for considering new science information is proposed:

1. Any new science request needs to be brought forward by one of the Parties to the agreement;
2. These requests would be submitted to the JTC and/or the SRG for their consideration and action; and
3. The time frame for analysis and reply for addressing the request will be dependent upon the scope and complexity of the request. The JTC and/or the SRG will be solicited for advice on the time frame required to address the request.

In the case of the need for consideration of new science being put forward between JMC meetings, or where an intersessional decision needs to be taken, the JMC Chairs may propose that such consideration be taken by mail, telephone, or electronic communication.

2) AP/JMC roles

Concerns were expressed that the AP is currently not discussing and considering the full range of industry views and concerns as part of negotiating their TAC recommendation. The JMC stresses that AP members should feel free to openly share their perspectives within the AP and to JMC members. There was also discussion about the timing of the AP meeting (currently concurrent to the JMC). It was suggested that the AP could meet in advance of the JMC to provide more time for AP deliberation.

While the AP should strive for a consensus in their report to the JMC there may be times where a consensus is not possible. With or without consensus it is important for the AP to ensure that their report includes a comprehensive record of the diverse views to help inform JMC deliberation about the coastwide TAC and other relevant issues. The JMC requests that the AP
review their Terms of Reference (TOR) to ensure that this direction is captured in the current TOR and to consider if amendments or adjustments would help facilitate the work of the AP.

3) MSE as a tool for managers

The JMC supports the MSE as an additional tool to be considered in the development of TAC advice and possible management procedure. A management procedure is an agreed formula, with an agreed set of data inputs, used to calculate a recommendation for a fisheries management measure – typically a TAC. Continuing the development of the MSE has the advantage of being able to reveal the trade-offs among a range of possible management decisions, and should assist the JMC and AP in determining whether the objectives should be weighted differently. Specifically, to provide the information on which to base a rational decision, given objectives, preferences, and attitudes to risk. An MSE can be an essential part of the process of developing the annual TAC recommendation and possible long-term harvest strategy.

It was acknowledged that the purpose of the MSE is to improve management decision making and will supplement the stock assessment development, review, and approval process. In general, the MSE is viewed as an important source of information for the JMC and all of the entities that contribute to the management of the hake resource through the treaty process. The MSE results have provided science-based validation of previous JMC management decisions with respect to setting the TAC lower than the current default harvest control rule. The JMC intends to continue to discuss how to shape the MSE to optimize its effectiveness at informing decision making.

4) Long-Term and Short-Term Outlooks

The JMC recognizes that there is a need to consider both short-term and long-term outlooks for Pacific hake stock status. There was discussion that the MSE should be a useful tool for this and there may be other information derived from the stock assessment that could be used in a similar manner to inform short- and long-term perspectives. The JMC will continue to discuss these issues with the support of the JTC, AP, and SRG.

5) Decision Tables

The current decision tables developed by the JTC provide current stock status and a relatively short-term outlook about the future status across a range of potential TACs. The current decision tables also provide a succinct and comprehensible, but limited, framing of scientific and management uncertainties that need to be considered by the JMC. It was suggested to explore the potential of developing a set of decision tables that could provide a longer-term perspective to help better inform the understanding of long-term fishery performance at certain harvest levels. The JMC will continue to discuss this topic with the support of the JTC, AP, and SRG.