



New England Fishery Management Council

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John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 17, 2019
TO: Tom Nies, Executive Director
FROM: Fishery Data for Stock Assessment Working Group
SUBJECT: **Planned changes to the report in response to the SSC review**

Note: Due to the partial federal government shutdown, Working Group members who are NOAA staff were on furlough and unable to review this memo.

The Fishery Data for Stock Assessment Working Group (WG) had a webinar scheduled for January 4, 2019, during which the WG was to discuss the recommendations from the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) panel peer review of the draft WG report (held November 30, 2018), and discuss plans for finalizing the WG report, which is to be presented to the Council in January. However, the webinar was postponed because of the partial federal government shutdown and has not yet been rescheduled. Instead, the WG provided this summary outlining planned changes to the draft WG report, which accompanies the draft report and presentation the Council will receive in January. The WG will reschedule the webinar as soon as possible, and will work to revise and finalize its report following the webinar.

Planned revisions to the draft WG report:

The WG will review the recommendations provided in the SSC panel peer review report¹. Based on these, the WG is planning to address these recommendations through the changes to the report discussed below. In general, the recommendations from the SSC are constructive and are not expected to require major revisions. The WG also identified other minor revisions to the report outside the SSC panel peer review.

The SSC panel peer review suggested that the report consider other information that may come from fishery dependent data sources, in particular, social and economic indicators, that could be useful when considering Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE). For example, the SSC panel peer review report discusses how there is a greater focus given to understanding the social and economic consequences of risk and decision making relative to fishing behavior and responses to management actions, and that understanding the economic incentives influencing fishing behavior and developing the behavioral models could reduce the biases of fishery dependent data and enhance the usefulness of CPUE data. The WG plans to address this recommendation by

¹ SSC Panel Peer Review Report of the Fishery Data for Stock Assessment Working Group Report (November 30, 2018)

expanding on the discussion of what social and economic indicators could provide useful data for creating a CPUE and discussing whether there is currently any socio-economic data coming from the assessments that could be incorporated. The WG also plans to further discuss the concept of developing a fishermen's perspective survey, similar to the Fishers' North Seas Stocks Survey conducted in support of ICES assessments², to collect socio-economic data and to provide information that can be shared with the assessment community about what the fishermen are seeing in their landings relative to what the scientists might see from their data sources. The SSC also suggested that it would be useful to summarize what fishery dependent data is currently collected and what data should be collected in order to better incorporate fishery data, particularly socio-economic data. The WG plans to address this suggestion as well.

The SSC panel peer review report recommends that consideration should be given to whether fishery dependent CPUE might be used to better assess discard species, for example in the groundfish fishery, the non-target bycatches of windowpane flounder and ocean pout, or constraining stocks such as Georges Bank yellowtail flounder. The WG plans to expand discussion on this point and explore the utility of CPUE indices for non-target bycatch stocks and "choke" stocks.

The WG is also considering adding a glossary section to the report to provide definitions of key terms used throughout the report. This concept has been discussed at both the SSC panel peer review and during WG meetings, and has been suggested to improve interpretation of the document by the public.

² Provided as Appendix 6 to the draft Fishery Data for Stock Assessment Working Group Report (November 19, 2018)