

SSC WORKING GROUP: STOCK DEFINITIONS FOR MUS

5.E(2)

136th SSC

June 2020 136th SSC Meeting

- Define stock based on scientific literature
- MUS definitions and stock definitions under NS3, per MSA
- International definitions (straddling stocks, etc)
- Example of straddling/transboundary stock definition in which MUS is partially in multiple assessed stocks: North Pacific striped marlin
- Example of MUS encompassing multiple stocks structures, but assessed as one: territorial bottomfish
- Research needs
- Get SSC to recommend Council solicit guidance

Between June and Sept (137th) SSC: Insular Group

- M Sabater plus SSC members (Camacho, Martell, Franklin), and independent expert (B Taylor)
- Objective: Prioritize criteria to define insular/shelf-associated stocks
- Criteria: Life history commonalities, species movement range, fishery range, total geographic range, genetic connectivity range
- Research needs
- Enforcement and local limitations

Between June and Sept (137th) SSC: Pelagic Group

- M Fitchett, plus SSC members (Itano, Piling, Harley), and independent expert (M Lutcavage)
- Objective: Prioritize criteria to define pelagic and highly migratory trans-jurisdictional species
- Criteria: Natal homing, genetic flow, species movement range, fishery characteristic, total geographic range, ontogenetic groups
- Research needs
- Political consequences

Sept (137th) SSC and Dec 2020 (138th) SSC Intersession: "Best Practice" Guidelines for Stock Definitions

- Define general stock scenarios of MUS: transboundary, straddling/international, encompassed, or combination?
- Based on each stock scenario: what are hierarchy of biological criteria to discern stock definition? When may political boundaries supersede biology?

- Investigate Western Pacific Regional stocks and define stocks based on above guidance - Council recommendation
- Devise a research plan for insular and pelagic fisheries to define stocks relative to MUS

Inform National Standards 3 on stock definitions for domestic and international stocks

- Ask for national adoption of methods to provide science based guidance on NS3, which is unclear
- Advancement of science capability allows more scientific definitions over political/arbitrary
- Peer-reviewed process and guidelines be codified in NS3

Pacific Islands and Western Pacific Region Stock Definition Guidelines

- Given specific geographical characteristics, develop idea and proper stock definitions for MUS that do not follow criteria or lack data/information
- Research plan for the region- Council adopted