

Black Sea Bass Assessment Review Workgroup Scope of Work

Analysis Type: Development of recommendations for the SEDAR 76: Black Sea Bass Operational Assessment model configurations

Justification: The Southeast Fishery Science Center (SEFSC) has requested technical input from the SSC on the SEDAR 76 Black Sea Bass Operational Assessment. The assessment was reviewed at the July SSC webinar meeting, during which the SEFSC asked the SSC for direction on how to proceed with the projections for the assessment and discuss several model parameters that could have an impact on the assessment. The SSC recommended forming a technical workgroup comprised of SSC members and SEFSC staff to evaluate approaches to handle harvest and discard estimates when selecting appropriate MSY proxies, associated reference points, and the impacts of these decisions on catch projections. The technical workgroup will address the list of questions and present a set of recommendations to the entire SSC at the Oct meeting.

List of questions

1. Are the methods for fitting to 2022 landings/discards and choice of F_{current} for 2023-2024 appropriate?
2. Is Maximum Landed Yield an acceptable proxy for MSY in this scenario or is $F_{0.1}$ or Total $F_{0.1}$ (and the associated SSB) more suitable?
3. The proposed $75\%*F_{0.1}$ is not consistent with the ABC control rule. What is the P^* that should be used for Black Sea Bass or, should an alternative approach be generated by the SSC. If so, provide detailed recommendations.
4. What should the F for the landings be set at if separating discards from landings in the projections?
 - a. Would a scenario with landings=0 and discards at recent average level, ignoring the change in reference point, be sufficient?
5. How should the issue of changing reference points be dealt with if we attempt to separate landings and discards?

Goal: Develop a set of recommendations for the SEFSC analyst to proceed with development of the base assessment model and catch level projections.

Members:

- SSC – Kai Lorenzen, (3-4 other SSC members)
- SEFSC – Matthew Vincent, Erik Williams
- SAFMC – Judd Curtis, Chip Collier, Mike Schmidtke

Timing and Tasks:

- Initial Meeting: 3-hr webinar, week of Sept 18 or Sept 25 to discuss list of questions
- Preliminary Assessment Report to full SSC: Oct 24-26
- Follow-up meeting (*if necessary*): Nov, TBD
- Final Black Sea Bass stock assessment review by full SSC: Jan/Feb 2024