



ADAPTING FISHERIES MANAGEMENT TO A CHANGING ECOSYSTEM

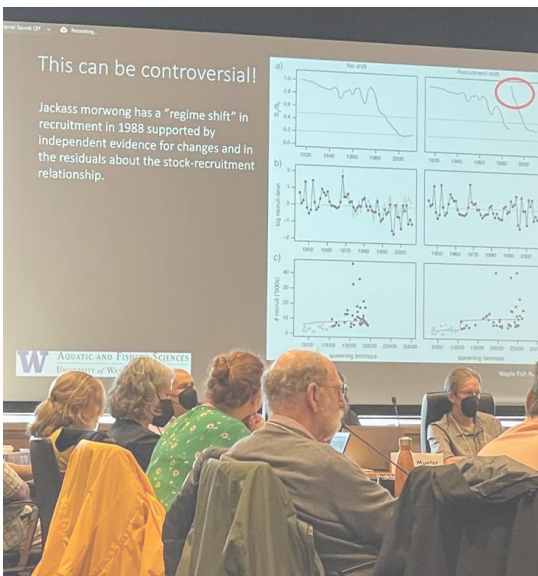
The North Pacific Fishery Management Council hosted the 7th national meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee (SCS7) in Sitka, Alaska August 15-17th. The meeting addressed challenging and timely fishery management issues and was well attended by SSC delegates and staff from all eight Regional Fishery Management Council SSCs, as well as NMFS Headquarters.

THEME TOPICS

1 How to incorporate ecosystem indicators into the stock assessment process?



2 Developing information to support management of interacting species in consideration of ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM).



3 How to assess and develop fishing level recommendations for species exhibiting distributional changes?

KEY FINDINGS

1 Councils need to start preparing now for increasingly complex management decisions due to climate change

- **Profound fishery implications** expected in next 20 years
- Need pathways to sustain fisheries in a **future non-stationary marine environment**
 - competing use of marine systems
 - abrupt shifts in distribution or abundance
 - changes in ecosystem structure and function
 - impacts on sectors and communities and data collection methodologies
- Finding **equitable management adaptation pathways** will be challenging



② Investment is needed in the development of new data collection and analysis tools that are responsive to changing conditions

- RFMCs need to consider **adaptation options** tailored to regional differences
 - Models with ecosystem linkages
 - Climate-informed risk assessments
 - Performance of management strategies
- **Suites of models** of different levels of complexity will be needed
- Data management to strengthen regional collaboration:
 - streamline data management
 - allow more 'open source' type data flows and interoperability
- Need interdisciplinary research teams, and more **student training** in this field



3 SSCs and Councils need to be prepared to transition toward a more sophisticated toolbox

- SSCs need to **prepare to transition**
 - from reliance on indicators derived from observations
 - to informed dynamic simulations of marine ecosystem change, tuned to observations
- **Begin scenario planning now** to avoid reactive responses
- Consider **additional flexibility** in the management process
- Create more **opportunities for strategic and creative thinking** at the regional and national levels



4 Stakeholder engagement will be critical for adaptive management to be successful

- Adaptive fisheries management will require **engagement from all stakeholders**
- **New understanding needed** of increasingly complex models and uncertainty due to environmental variability
- Science-based recommendations and management risks need to be **clearly communicated** to build stakeholder confidence in new models or tools that provide tradeoffs given increased uncertainty
- An **inclusive process** for increased public engagement will benefit both stakeholder education as well as informing ecosystem-based management approaches



Recommendations for future SCS workshops



- Being **in-person** allowed for cross-regional dialogue and collaboration
- **Breakout sessions** with rotating participation effective, and case studies
- **Council member participation** valuable, encourage for future
- **Biennial** timing
- Need **additional communication among SSCs** in the off-year
 - Ideas: informal workgroup of SSC leadership or a virtual workshop

Adapting Fisheries Management to a Changing Ecosystem

7th National Scientific Coordination Subcommittee Meeting



Proceedings available in the Spring of 2023, to be presented at May 2023 CCC meeting.

Access [online](#) now:

- meeting agenda
- all presentations
- plenary recordings

Thank you!

SCS7 Delegates in front of Crescent Harbor, Sitka, Alaska



SCS7, August 15-17th, Sitka, Alaska