

## ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP REPORT ON ADOPT FINAL STOCK ASSESSMENTS

The Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) would like to thank the Stock Assessment Teams (STATs) for including ecosystem considerations in their groundfish assessment documents this cycle. Bringing more ecosystem science into stock assessments is a priority in Chapter 6 of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) and in the Council's Research and Data Needs document.

In particular, we draw the Council's attention to the sablefish assessment for its incorporation of an environmental factor (i.e. a sea level index) into the assessment inputs ([Agenda Item H.5, Attachment 7](#)), which is responsive to the Council's March 2016 request on sablefish ecosystem indicators. We recognize the considerable effort it took to develop the index and incorporate it into the assessment and commend the STAT for the collaboration between stock assessment and ecosystem experts. The sea level index also received considerable attention at the Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel. It is encouraging to see that they "strongly encouraged" continued evaluation of "the use of sea level and/or other environmental indicators as drivers of both historic and future recruitments" ([Agenda Item H.5, Attachment 8](#)).

We call the Council's attention to Appendix A of the assessment on Ecosystem Considerations, authored by Drs. Nick Tolimieri, Chris Harvey and Jameal Samhoury. Beyond discussion of the sea level index, the Appendix appreciably forwards the goal to bring "ecosystem perspective into the assessment process." Their discussion of ecological and socio-economic factors, including discussion on the causes of variation in recruitment, is highly informative. The Council and National Marine Fisheries Service Science Centers should encourage and support such collaborations in future assessment cycles.

PFMC  
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