Harvest Control Rule
Draft Addenda/Framework

ASMFC Spring Meeting

May 5, 2022




Outline

1. Background
2. Harvest Control Rule Options
3. Target Metric for Setting Measures
4. Conservation Equivalency
5. Accountability Measures
6. Preliminary Summary of Public Comment– *Hearings Only*
7. Next Steps




Background and Timeline

- **February 2022**: Policy Board approved HCR Draft Addenda for public comment. Council approved range of options for Framework. They also tasked the SSC with providing a qualitative evaluation of the five primary alternatives.
- **March/April 2022**: Public hearings held March 16 - April 13, 2022. Written comments accepted through April 22, 2022.

Statement of the Problem

- The Commission & Council's current recreational measures setting process faces several challenges
  - Concerns related to uncertainty and variability in the recreational fishery data
  - Need to change measures (sometimes annually) based on those data
  - Perception that measures are not reflective of current stock status
  - Management measures have not always had their intended effect on overall harvest.




Goal Statement

Establish process for setting recreational measures that:

- prevents overfishing,
- is reflective of stock status,
- appropriately accounts for uncertainty in the recreational data,
- takes into consideration angler preferences, and
- provides an appropriate level of stability and predictability in changes from year to year.




Management Options for Setting Measures

- 5 possible approaches for setting bag, size, season limits.
- Key differences include:
  - Information, such as expected harvest, stock size, or fishing mortality, considered when setting measures
  - Circumstances under which measures would change
- Each option defines a process for establishing measures.
- None of the options implement specific measures. Measures would be established and modified through separate future specifications actions.

Management Options for Setting Measures

- **Option: A No Action**
- **Option B: Percent Change**
- **Option C: Fishery Score**
- **Option D: Biological Reference Point**
- **Option E: Biomass Based Matrix**

Option A: No Action
(Current Recreational Measures Setting Process)

Information Used:

Expected harvest	Stock Biomass	Fishing mortality	Recruitment	Biomass trend

- Expected harvest under status quo measures compared to future recreational harvest limits

Measures reviewed annually

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Information Used:

Expected harvest	Stock Biomass	Fishing mortality	Recruitment	Biomass trend

- Recent MRIP harvest estimates compared to future recreational harvest limits
- Stock size (biomass relative to biomass target)

Measures set for two years

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used			
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits	Stock Size (B/B_{MSY})		
A	Harvest expected to be below the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
B	Harvest expected to be close to the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits			

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used			
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits	Stock Size (B/B_{MSY})		
A	Harvest expected to be below the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
B	Harvest expected to be close to the upcoming recreational harvest limits	Very high (at least 150% of the target stock size)		
		High (between the target and 150% of the target stock size)		
		Low (below the target stock size)		
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits			

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used		Target Change in Harvest	
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits	Stock Size (B/B_{MSY})		
A	Harvest expected to be below the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
B	Harvest expected to be close to the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
		Low 	Small reduction: 10%	
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits			

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used			
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits			
A	Harvest expected to be below the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
B	Harvest expected to be close to the upcoming recreational harvest limits			
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits			

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used			
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits	Stock Size (B/B_{MSY})		
A				
B				
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits 	Very high (at least 150% of the target stock size)		
		High (between the target and 150% of the target stock size)		
		Low (below the target stock size)		

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used		Sub-options for Target Change in Harvest	
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits			
A				
B				
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits	Very high 	Sub-Option B-2A: Small reduction: 10%	Sub-Option B-2B: No liberalization or reduction

Option B: Percent Change Approach

Row	Information Used		Target Change in Harvest	
	Estimated harvest compared to future limits	Stock Size (B/B_{MSY})		
A	Harvest expected to be below the upcoming recreational harvest limits	Very high (at least 150% of the target stock size)	Sub-Option B-1A: Liberalization amount based on difference between expected harvest and RHL	Sub-Option B-1B: Large liberalization: 40%
		High (between the target and 150% of the target stock size)	Sub-Option B-1A: Liberalization amount based on difference between expected harvest and RHL	Sub-Option B-1B: Medium liberalization: 20%
		Low (below the target stock size)	Sub-Option B-2A: Small liberalization: 10%	Sub-Option B-2B: No liberalization or reduction
B	Harvest expected to be close to the upcoming recreational harvest limits	Very high (at least 150% of the target stock size)	Small liberalization: 10%	
		High (between the target and 150% of the target stock size)	No liberalization or reduction	
		Low (below the target stock size)	Small reduction: 10%	
C	Harvest expected to be higher than the upcoming recreational harvest limits	Very high (at least 150% of the target stock size)	Sub-Option B-2A: Small reduction: 10%	Sub-Option B-2B: No liberalization or reduction
		High (between the target and 150% of the target stock size)	Sub-Option B-1A: Reduction amount based on difference between expected harvest and RHL	Sub-Option B-1B: Medium reduction:20%
		Low (below the target stock size)	Sub-Option B-1A: Reduction amount based on difference between expected harvest and RHL	Sub-Option B-1B: Large reduction: 40%

Option C: Fishery Score Approach

Combine four metrics into one fishery score:

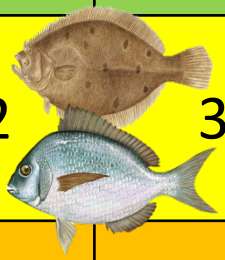
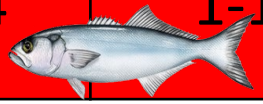
Expected harvest	Stock Biomass	Fishing mortality	Recruitment	Biomass trend

- Recent MRIP harvest estimate compared to future recreational harvest limits
- Stock size; i.e., biomass relative to biomass target
- Fishing mortality
- Recent recruitment

Each metric weighted depending on importance

Measures set for two years and predetermined

Option C: Fishery Score Approach

Bin	Fishery Score	Stock Status and Fishery Performance Outlook	Measures
1 	4-5	Good	Most Liberal
2 	3-3.99	Moderate	Liberal
3	2-2.99	Poor	Restrictive
4 	1-1.99	Very Poor	Most Restrictive

Option D: Biological Reference Point Approach

Information Used:

Expected harvest	Stock Biomass	Fishing mortality	Recruitment	Biomass trend

Primary information used:

- Stock size; i.e., biomass relative to biomass target
- Fishing mortality

Secondary information used:

- Expected harvest compared to RHL
- Recent recruitment
- Biomass trend

Option D: Biological Reference Point Approach

Stock Biomass Compared to Target Level	Overfishing is Not Occurring Fish are being harvested sustainably	Overfishing is Occurring Too many fish are being removed through fishing
Very High At least 150% of the target stock size	2015 / 2013 R↑ R↓ B↑ liberal liberal B↓ default default 1	2017 / 2019 R↑ R↓ Recent harvest limits **have not** been exceeded: B↑ default restrictive; B↓ restrictive restrictive Recent harvest limits **have** been exceeded: B↑ B↓ restrictive and re-evaluate measures 4
High Above the target, but below 150% target stock size	R↑ R↓ B↑ liberal liberal B↓ default default 2	R↑ R↓ Recent harvest limits **have not** been exceeded: B↑ default restrictive; B↓ restrictive restrictive Recent harvest limits **have** been exceeded: B↑ B↓ restrictive and re-evaluate measures 5
Low Below the target stock size, but more than 50% of the target stock size	R↑ R↓ B↑ default restrictive B↓ restrictive restrictive 3	R↑ R↓ Recent harvest limits **have not** been exceeded: B↑ default restrictive; B↓ restrictive restrictive Recent harvest limits **have** been exceeded: B↑ B↓ restrictive and re-evaluate measures 6
Overfished (Too Low) Less than 50% of the target stock size	**MOST RESTRICTIVE/REBUILDING PLAN** 7	

Option E: Biomass Based Matrix Approach

Information Used:

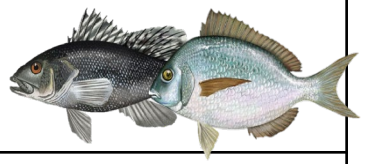
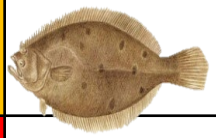
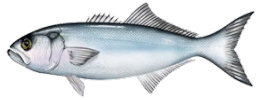
Expected harvest	**Stock Biomass**	Fishing mortality	Recruitment	**Biomass trend**

- Stock size; i.e., biomass relative to biomass target
- Stock size (biomass) trend

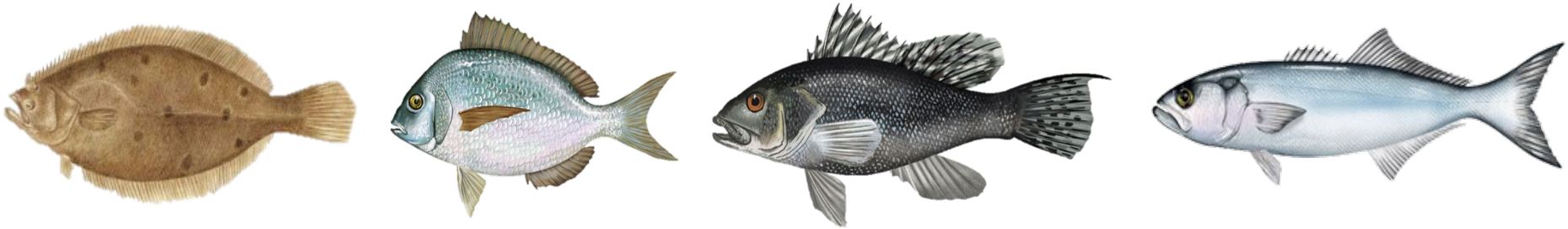
Measures set for two years

Measures would be pre-determined

Option E: Biomass Based Matrix Approach

Stock Size (i.e., biomass compared to target level)	Stock Size (Biomass) Trend		
	Increasing	**Stable**	**Decreasing**
Very High: At least 150% of target stock size	Bin 1 		
High: Above the target, but below 150% target stock size	Bin 1	Bin 2	
Low: Below the target stock size, but more than 50% of the target stock size	Bin 3 	Bin 4	
Overfished (Too Low): Less than 50% of the target stock size	Bin 5	Bin 6 	

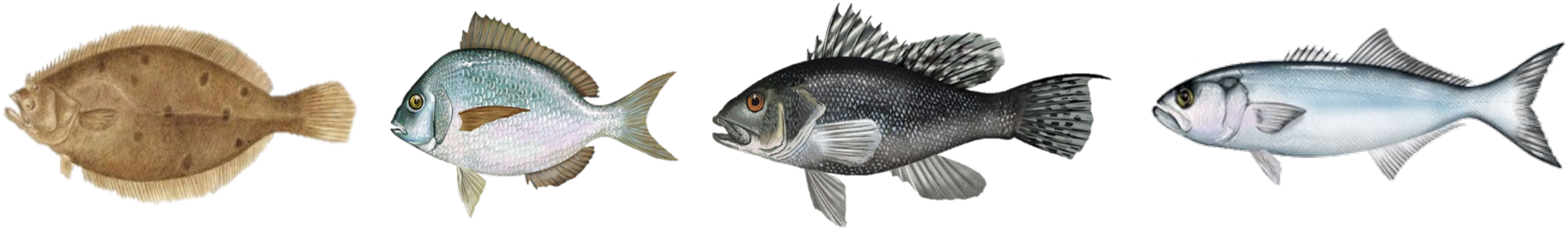
Target Metric for Setting Measures



Target Metric for Setting Measures

- Relevant to options with bins and associated pre-defined measures.
- Specify whether measures in each bin achieve a target level of:
  - Option 3.2A **Harvest**
  - Option 3.2B **Recreational dead catch** (harvest plus dead discards)
  - Option 3.2C **Fishing mortality**

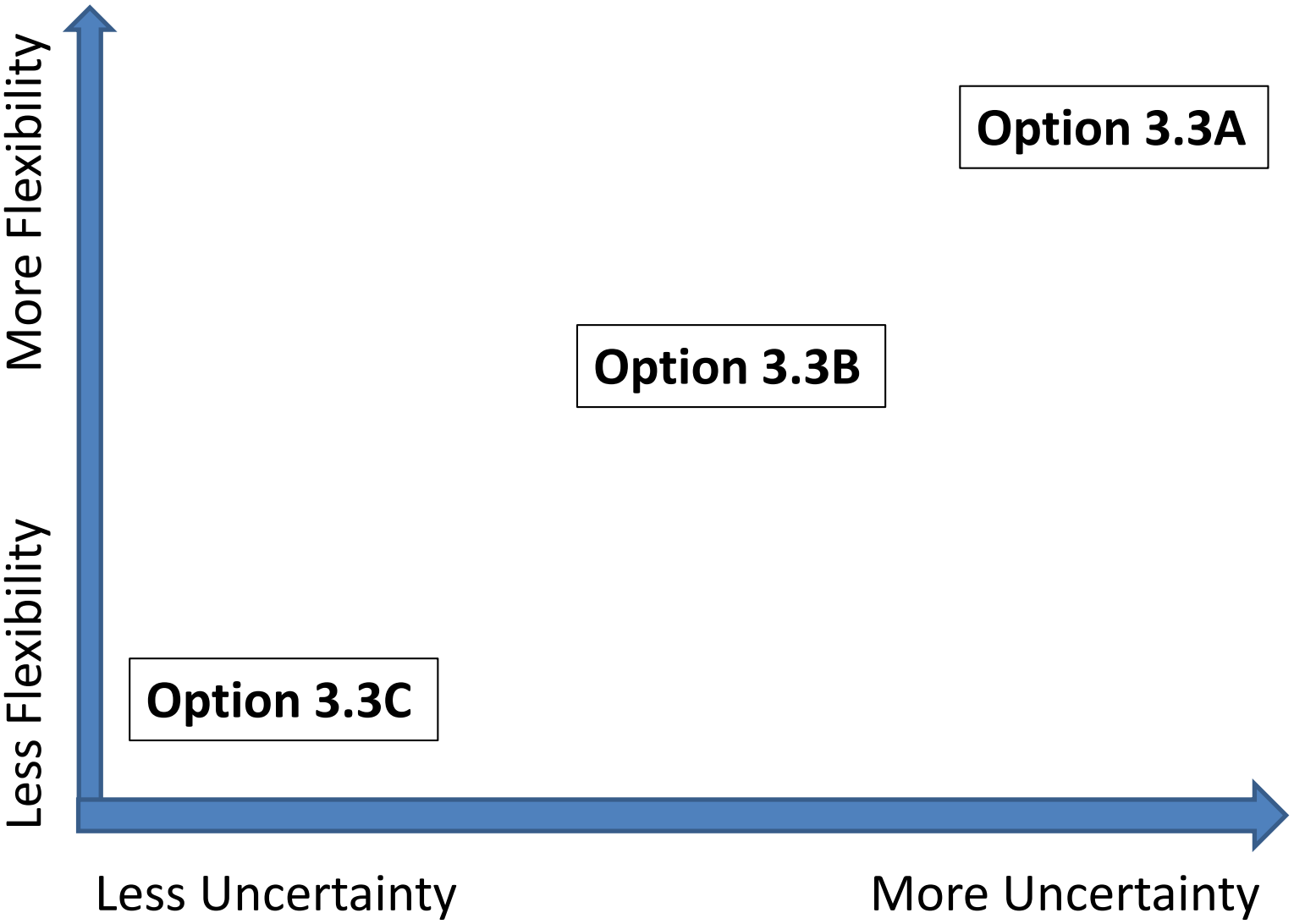
Conservation Equivalency



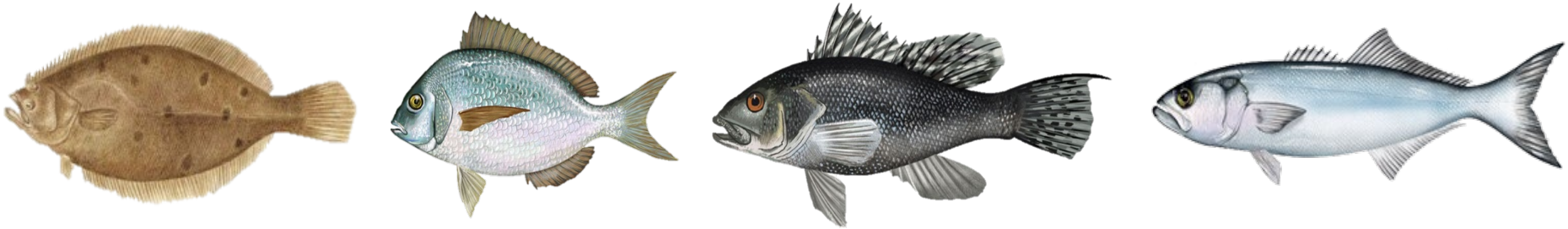
Conservation Equivalency Options

- Defines the level of flexibility states have in proposing alternative measures **after the specifications process**
  - Option 3.3A Allows individual states to adjust measures
  - Option 3.3B Allows grouping of states within a region to adjust measures
  - Option 3.3C Does not allow states or regions to adjust measures
- Under all Harvest Control Rule approaches, states and regions are able to provide input **during the specifications process**

Comparison of Conservation Equivalency Options



Accountability Measures



Accountability Measures

- Accountability measures aim to
  - Prevent catch limit overages
  - Correct or mitigate for overages when they do occur
- A required component of the federal management program.
- When catch limits have been exceeded, all options in the addenda require re-evaluation of measures to prevent future overages.
- Some sub-options consider if the response to an overage should be driven by whether or not the overage resulted in overfishing.

Preliminary Summary of Public Comment
Webinar Hearings Only

- 8 webinar hearings held March 16-April 13, 2022
- Webinar attendance (excluding Commission/Council staff) ranged from 9 to 63 people per hearing
- Written comments are still being tallied. A final public comment summary will be available with the briefing materials for the June Council/Policy Board meeting.
- The following summary of comments is based only on verbal public comments given at the hearings

Preliminary Summary of Public Comment
Webinar Hearings Only

- Comments on preferred options
  - Most people who spoke in favor of a specific option during a webinar hearing favored option B.
  - Many felt uncomfortable with C, D, and E due to current uncertainty in what management measures would be assigned to each bin.
  - No verbal comments provided during the hearings supported option A, status quo.

Preliminary Summary of Public Comment
Webinar Hearings Only

- Several comments on the lack of confidence in MRIP data, and how we should stop using MRIP data or consider other information, such as biomass, when making management decisions.
- For those who commented on conservation equivalency, the no action conservation equivalency option (states retain ability to propose conservation equivalent measures) was the preferred option.

Next Steps

- **May 10, 2022:** SSC meeting to discuss their review of HCR
- **May 25, 2022**: AP meeting
- **Late May 2022** (date TBD): FMAT/PDT meeting
- **May 27, 2022**: Most briefing materials for final action posted (including final SSC report and full summary of public comment period)
- **June 7, 2022**: Council/Policy Board meeting - **final action**
- **June – Dec 2022:** Development, review, and finalization of FW document; federal rulemaking process
- **Fall 2022:** Recreational Economic Demand Model and Recreational Fleet Dynamics Model available for use for one or more species
- **Fall – Winter 2022:** Use preferred HCR alternative to set rec measures for 2023

Questions?