

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Small Mesh Multispecies (Whiting) Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Southern Red Hake rebuilding: Management alternatives for an action to initiate southern red hake rebuilding will be presented at this Council meeting. Following the Council meeting, the PDT and staff will analyze the alternatives and prepare a draft document for final approval at either the April or June Council meetings.
- B. Assessments: A research track stock assessment for red hake, focusing on stock structure, is being conducted. The terms of reference include an examination of stock structure, survey catchability, biological reference points, and gaps in research. The assessment will consider differences in morphometrics and otolith microchemistry as well as other data related to stock structure, but DNA and tagging data are unavailable.

An assessment working group meeting was held on January 6-8, 2020 and the working group's reports are due in mid-February. The independent peer review meeting is scheduled for March 9-12, with results to be presented to the Council in April or June. Management track assessments are scheduled in the fall of 2020, which will be used to develop 2021-2023 specifications.

- C. Specifications: The final year for current specifications are 2020. The Council will initiate an action to adjust specifications for 2021-2023, with a final meeting for approval in December 2020.
- D. Research priorities: The PDT, the Advisory Panel and Committee reviewed and developed recommendations for 2020-2024 research priorities, which the Council will approve in April.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

Approve a range of alternatives to be analyzed in an action to initiate southern red hake rebuilding.

III. INFORMATION

1. Presentation – summary of recommendations on alternatives to initiate southern red hake rebuilding
2. PDT recommendations on alternatives
3. Advisory Panel and Committee recommendations on alternatives
4. Meeting summary: Joint AP and Committee meeting, January 27, 2020
5. Correspondence