

Sea Scallop Fact Sheet for Framework Adjustment 21 Discussion and Summary of Council
Rationale for November 2009 Decision
Jan 7, 2010

1. 2009 and 2010 overfishing threshold is: **.29**
2. F target in 2009 Scallop FMP was: **.20**
3. F projected for 2009 is: **.30**
4. Landings target in 2009 Scallop FMP was: **46 million pounds**
5. Landings projected for 2009 are: **56-57 million pounds**
6. Landings target for 2010 in approved FW 21 is: **42 million pounds**
7. Revenues from these additional 10 million pounds should yield about \$65 million dollars based on most recent estimate of 2009 average price from NMFS dealer data of \$6.5 per pound (March-Oct 2009). The additional 10 million pounds are expected to lower the projected average price per pound that was used in FW19.

FW19 projected 46 million pounds would be landed in 2009 at \$7.55 dollars, total revenue of \$347 million dollars. However, when closer to 56 million pounds are landed the average price per pound will decline. The prices are also expected to be lower than predicted in FW19 because of the decline in import prices and the recession in 2009. If 56 million pounds are ultimately landed in 2009 with an average price of \$6.5, total revenues in 2009 will likely be closer to \$364 million dollars.
8. **A new Scallop Benchmark Assessment** will be conducted in spring 2010. New reference points will be examined. Preliminary non peer-reviewed PDT work showed that the overfishing threshold may be higher (.37), and ABC could also be set higher. **The peer reviewed assessment and any new reference points will be part of Amendment 15 (ACLs and AMs).**
9. Our SSC recommended an ABC for 2010 as: **65.2 million pounds** including landings, discards and incidental mortality.
10. Backing out discards and incidental mortality (over 7 million pounds), the actual ABC for landings in 2010 should not be set above **57.8 million pounds**.
11. This ABC is based on the assumption that fishing effort is evenly distributed and vessels can access all exploitable scallops –this is not the case at all. Many scallops are in closed areas, so OY (ABC reduced for other issues like EFH, GF bycatch) is actually substantially lower than 57 million pounds since those scallops can't be harvested currently.

In addition, there is not enough YT flounder available for the scallop fishery to catch all the scallops it “can/should” related to the YT allocation restriction, so that also should be considered in setting OY. Therefore, if the target is set just below the ABC, and scallops in EFH areas are not accessible, F will be higher in the available areas to compensate for scallops that can’t be harvested in EFH areas. This has been a chronic problem in this fishery and a reason why F levels have been high in open areas. Revising how F levels are set in each area is being considered in Amendment 15, but not available for FW21. To be clear, these issues have nothing to do with management uncertainty – that comes later when setting targets to be sure OY/ABC/ACL/OFL is not exceeded.

12. If projections show that the FMP target of .20 may result in an actual F of .30 (overfishing threshold), then a .24 target may result in an actual F of .36 (**simple math: .20 is to .24 as .30 is to .36**). **This is management uncertainty.**
 - However, the Council recognized that it is more likely that overall F will not exceed the target by so much because of the adjustments the PDT has made to how F is calculated. Specifically, a higher LPUE estimate was used in the 2010 projection, a higher number of FT equivalent vessels was used, and several more years of survey and fishery data (2007-2009) should improve the estimate of F.
13. These facts formed the basis of the Council’s decision in November:
 - the **F of .20 option has higher long term biological and economic benefits** than the F of .24 option;
 - the **F of .20 option requires less YT allocation, and is expected to have lower impacts on sea turtles and EFH** than .24 option because area swept projections are lower.
14. Since the Council’s decision in November, numerous letters have been written to NMFS, the Secretary of Commerce and the Council arguing that these facts are not supported by science. **If the Secretary believes the Council erred or disagrees with the Council’s decision, he can disapprove FW 21.**