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Office of Sustainable Fisheries

Annual Catch Limits *and* Accountability Measures

Presentation to the
Regional Fishery Management Council Training
October 2017
Silver Spring, MD

Learning Objectives

- Incorporate stock assessment information into setting ACLs
- Demonstrate skills in a test fishery

Road Map

- Requirements
- Reference Points
- Performance
- Wrap-up and group exercise

Why do we have ACLs?

- National Standard 1
  - Requires that U.S. fisheries management:
    - Prevent overfishing
    - Achieve optimum yield
- 2007 MSA Reauthorization
  - Introduced annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs)

Stocks with ACLs

- ACLs for “each of its managed fisheries”
  - FMPs vary in their inclusiveness of stocks
  - Both target and non-target stocks

Exceptions to ACLs

- Under MSA
  - Species with annual life cycles, unless subject to overfishing
  - Stocks managed under an international agreement to which the U.S. is party

Accountability Measures (AMs)

- Management Controls
  - Prevent ACLs – including sector ACLS – from being exceeded
  - Correct or mitigate overages of the ACL, if they occur
- Address and minimized both frequency and magnitude of overage
- Correct the problems that caused overage in as short a time as possible

Accountability Measures (AMs)

- Inseason AMs
  - Used whenever possible
  - Includes inseason monitoring and management measures

- "Post-Season" AM
  - Address operational issues

Question:

Accountability measures must deduct ACL overages in the following year.

1. True
2. False

Know Your Reference Points

OFL ≥ ABC ≥ ACL ≥ ACT

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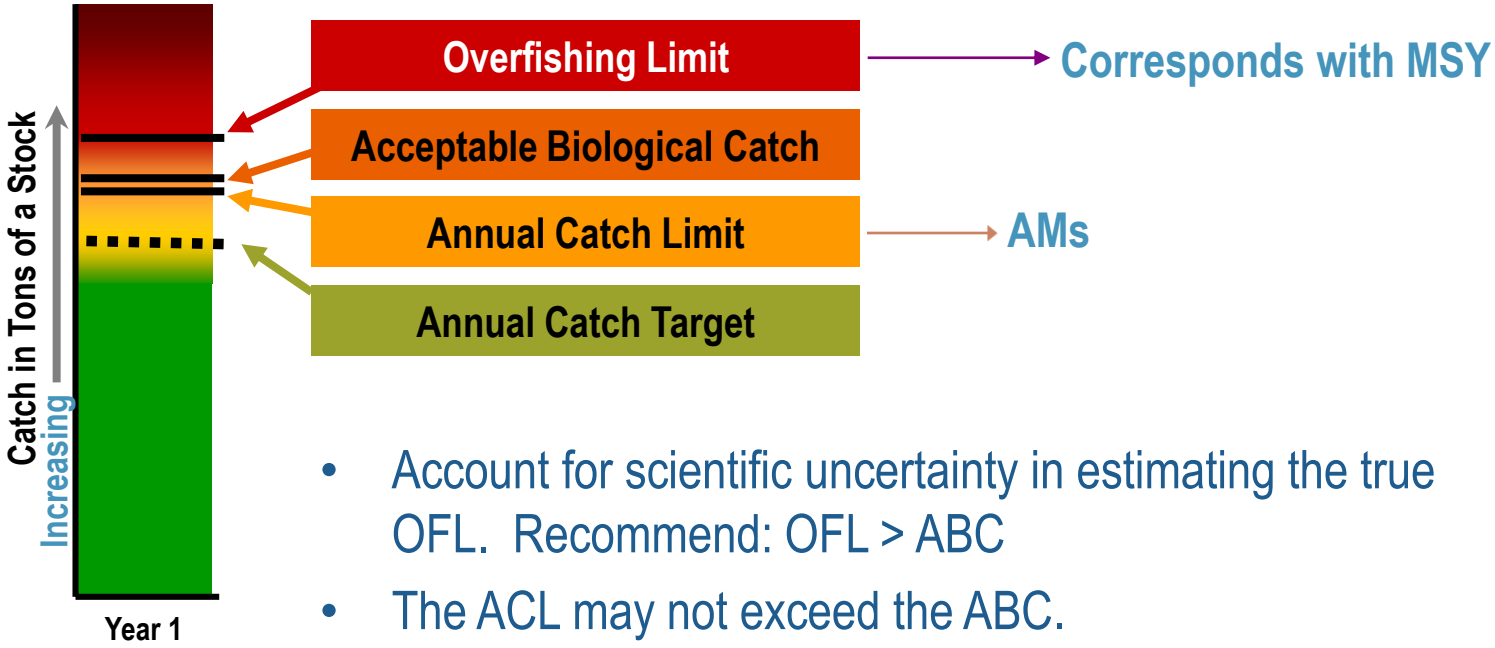
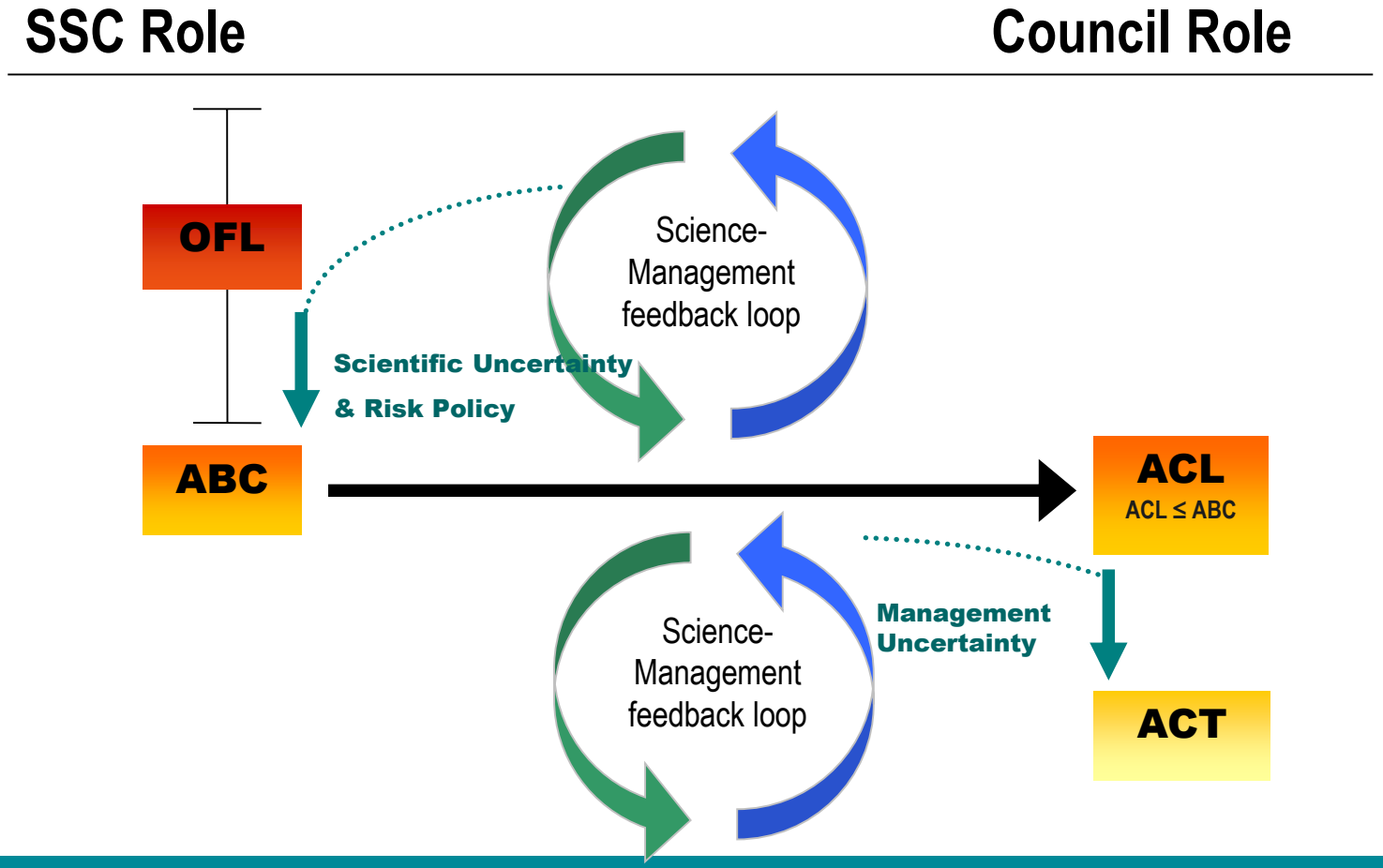


- Account for scientific uncertainty in estimating the true OFL. Recommend: OFL > ABC
- The ACL may not exceed the ABC.
- Account for management uncertainty in controlling the actual catch to the target. For example: ACL > ACT

Roles in Setting ACLs



Assessing the risk of overfishing

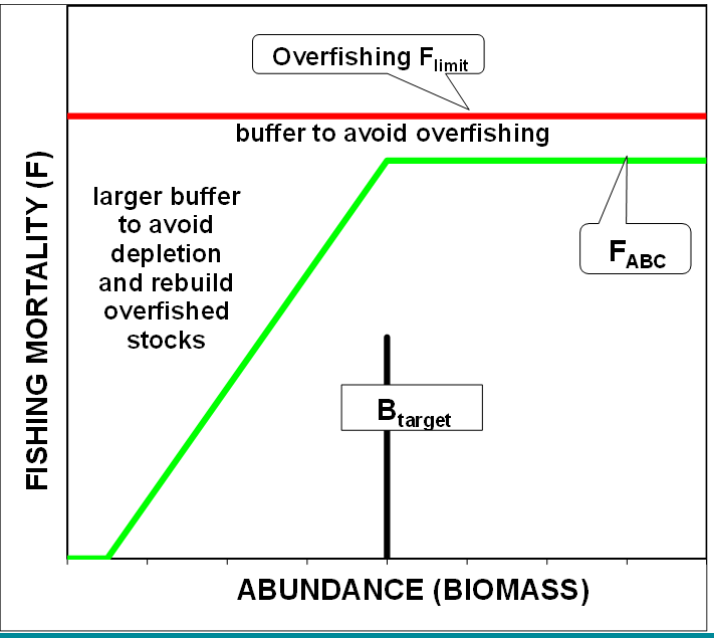
- ACL set "*such that overfishing does not occur*"
- Managers establish a policy, in consultation with the SSC, to use in specification of ABC such that there is an acceptably low risk that overfishing will occur

- **ABC control rule**
  - *Scientific uncertainty & risk policy*

ABC Control Rule

Scientific Uncertainty and Risk Policy

- Captures how catch responds to abundance
  - Constant Fishing Mortality
  - Constant Catch
  - Fishing Mortality – B-based

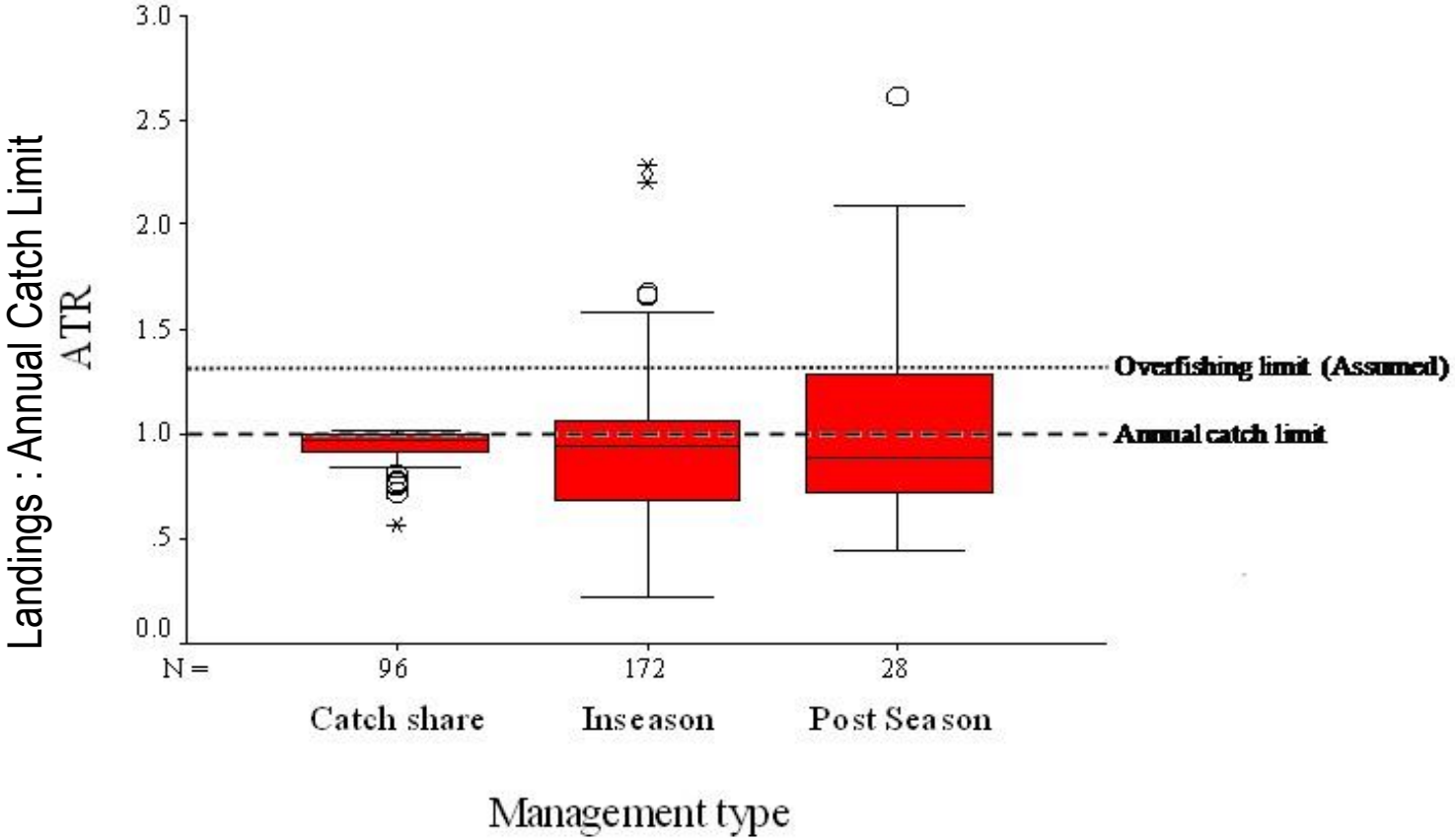


Management Uncertainty

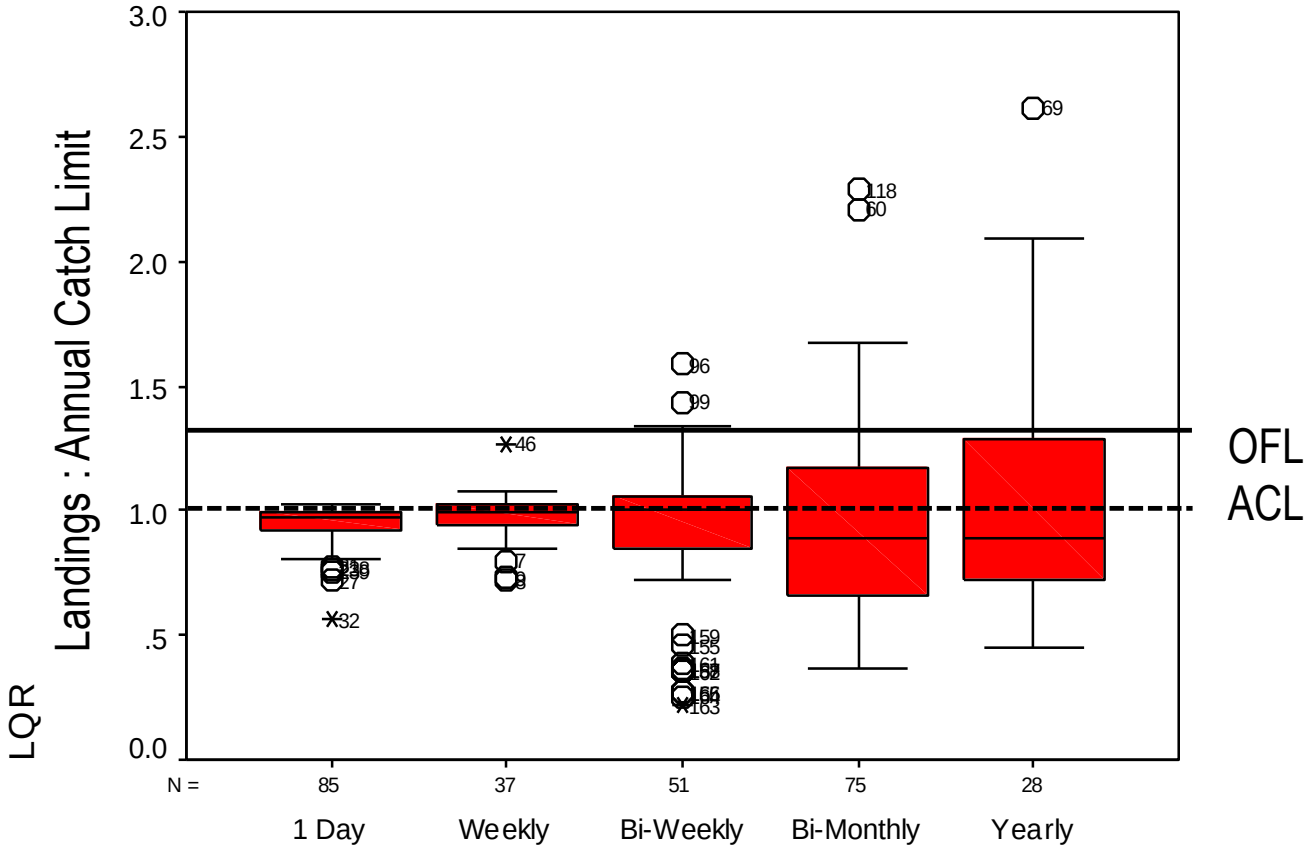
- Management precision and setting appropriate catch levels

- **Example: ACT control rule**
  - *(Optional) Policy for establishing a target catch level based on management uncertainty*

Management Uncertainty –
By Management Type

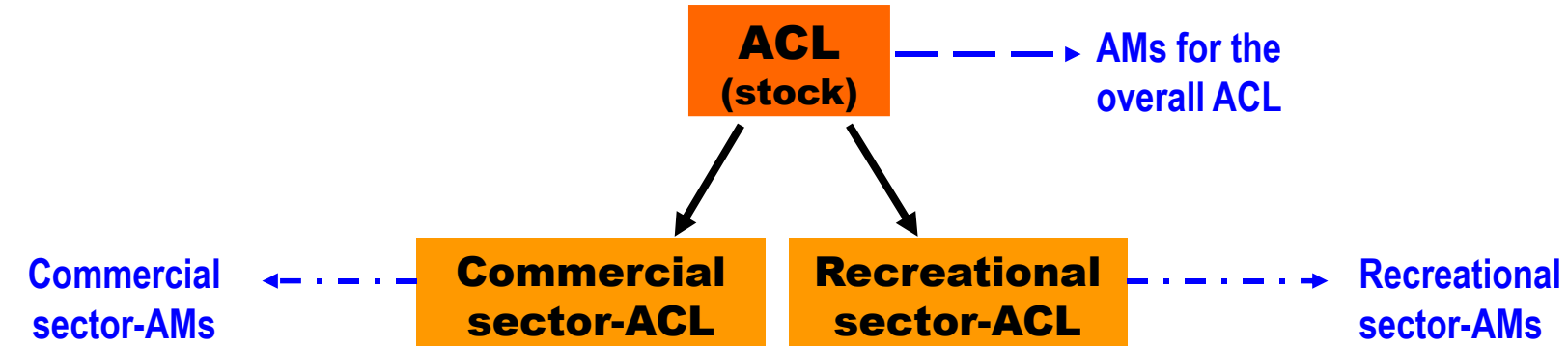


Management Uncertainty –
By Reporting Frequency



Allocations - Sectors

- **Optional** - sub-divide a stock's ACL into "sector-ACLs".
  - Sum must not exceed overall ACL
  - AMs for the overall ACL
  - Sector-AMs for each sector-ACL
    - Fair and equitable.



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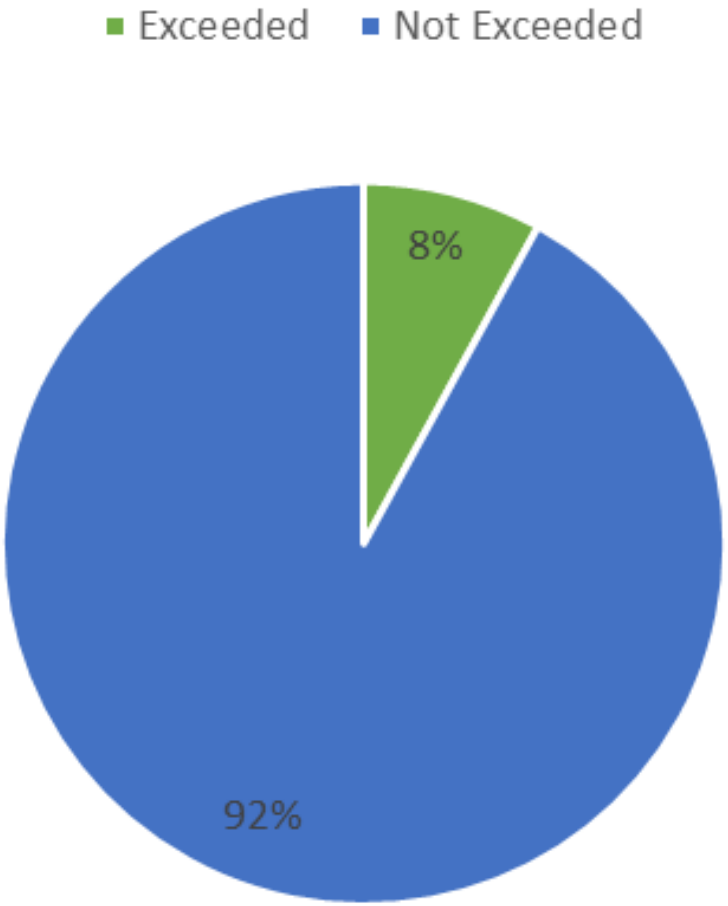
Question:

Which of these is NOT a source of management uncertainty?

1. Management program type.
2. Estimated discard mortality.
3. Reporting frequency.

Tracking ACL Progress



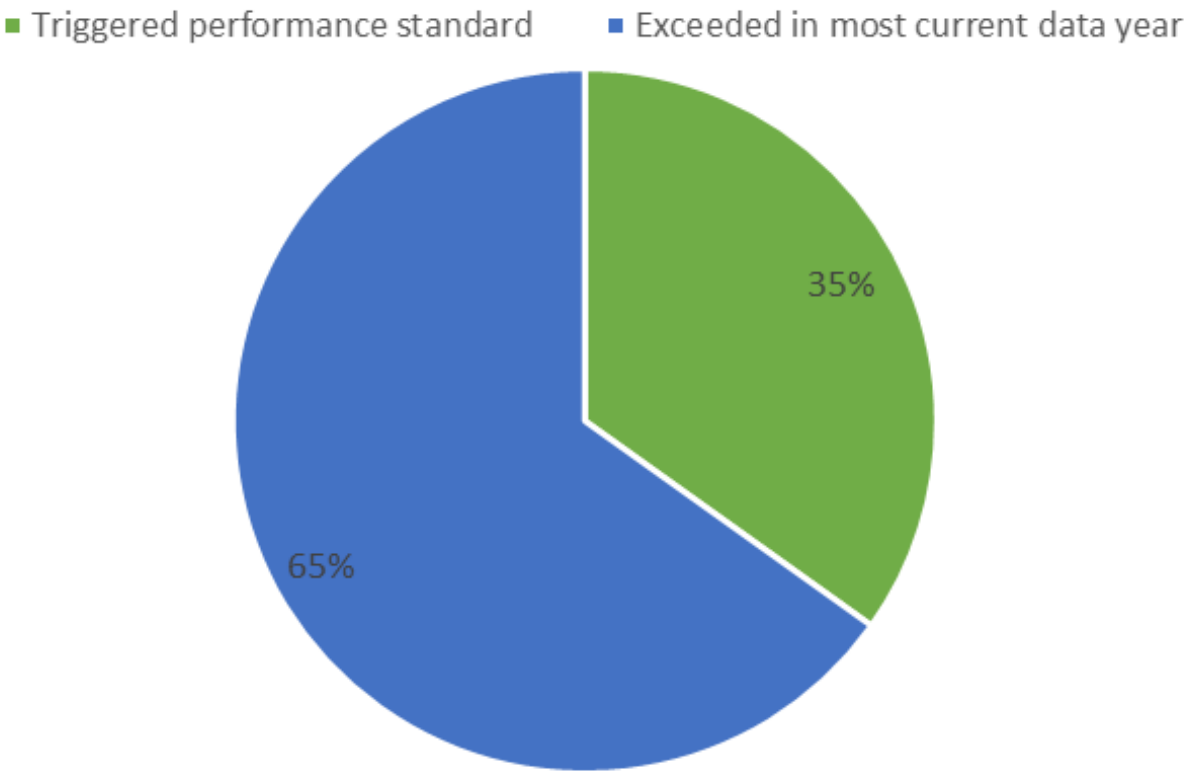
- Reporting to NOAA (*ongoing*)
  - % of ACLs not exceeded nationally
  - Report quarterly

Performance Standards

- Because of uncertainty, there is always a chance that overfishing could occur.
- To prevent chronic overfishing:
  - The system of ACLs and AMs should be re-evaluated and modified if the ACL is exceeded *more than 1 in 4 years.*
  - A higher performance standard could be used if a stock is particularly vulnerable to the effects of overfishing.

Performance Standards

Through 2016



Question:

Performance standards are intended to keep overfishing from becoming a chronic condition.

- True
- False

Summary

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MSA requires:

- ACLs and AMs to end or prevent overfishing,
- ACLs may not exceed recommendations of SSC
- ACLs and AMs in all managed fisheries, with 2 exceptions.

Summary

- ACLs and AMs for all stocks/stock complexes, unless exempted.
- Clearly account for scientific and management uncertainty.
- AMs prevent ACL overages, where possible, and address overages, if they occur.
- ABC Control Rules account for scientific uncertainty and incorporate the Council's risk policy
- Performance standards: address assumptions in ACL setting to prevent chronic overfishing

Group Exercise

Given the data – set an ACL

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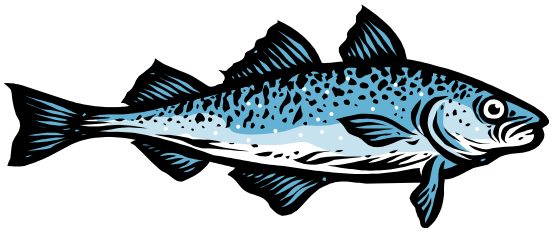
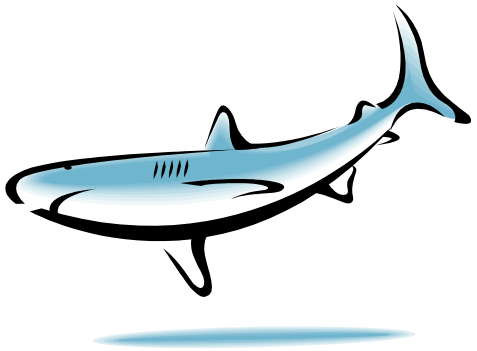
Scenario 1 – Yellow-eye cod

Data Rich



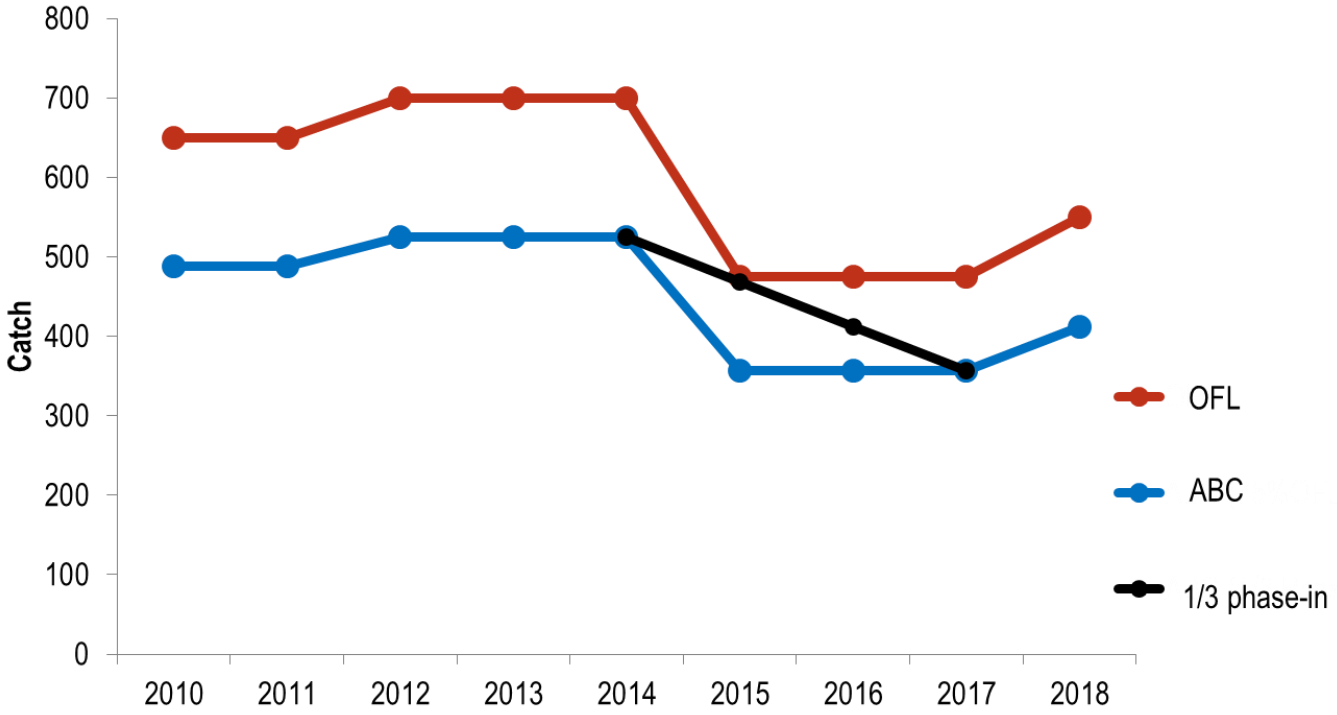
Scenario 2 – Shadow shark

Data Poor

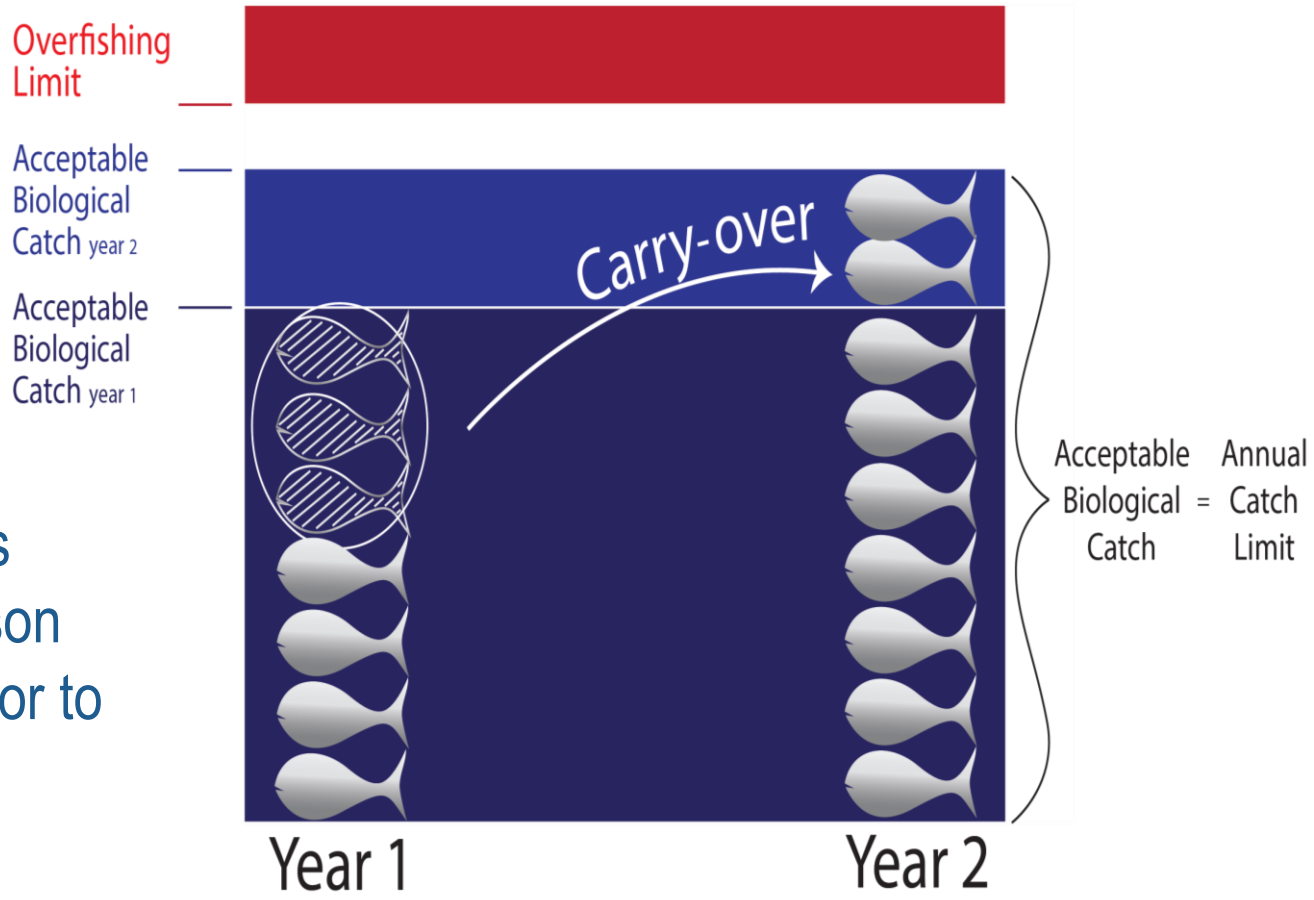


Phasing in ABC Control Rule

Must prevent overfishing



Carry-over of Unused ACL



Consider the stock's condition & the reason for the underage prior to carrying-over