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Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures

Presentation to the
Regional Fishery Management Council Training
October, 2019
Silver Spring, MD

Learning Objectives

- Describe the ACL and AM requirements
- Demonstrate skills in a test fishery



Road Map

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

Why Do We Have ACLs?

2007 MSA Reauthorization

- Annual Catch Limits (ACLs)
- Accountability Measures (AMs)



National Standard 1

- Prevent Overfishing
- Achieve Optimum Yield



Stocks with ACLs

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



Exceptions to ACLs

- 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 from being exceeded
 - Correct or mitigate any ACL overages
- Address & minimize
 - Frequency/magnitude of overage
- Correct problems that caused overage
 - In as short a time as possible

Types of Accountability Measures (AMs)

- Inseason
 - Monitoring
 - Management measures
 - Use when possible
- Post-Season
 - Operational issues
 - Biological consequences



Quiz Time!

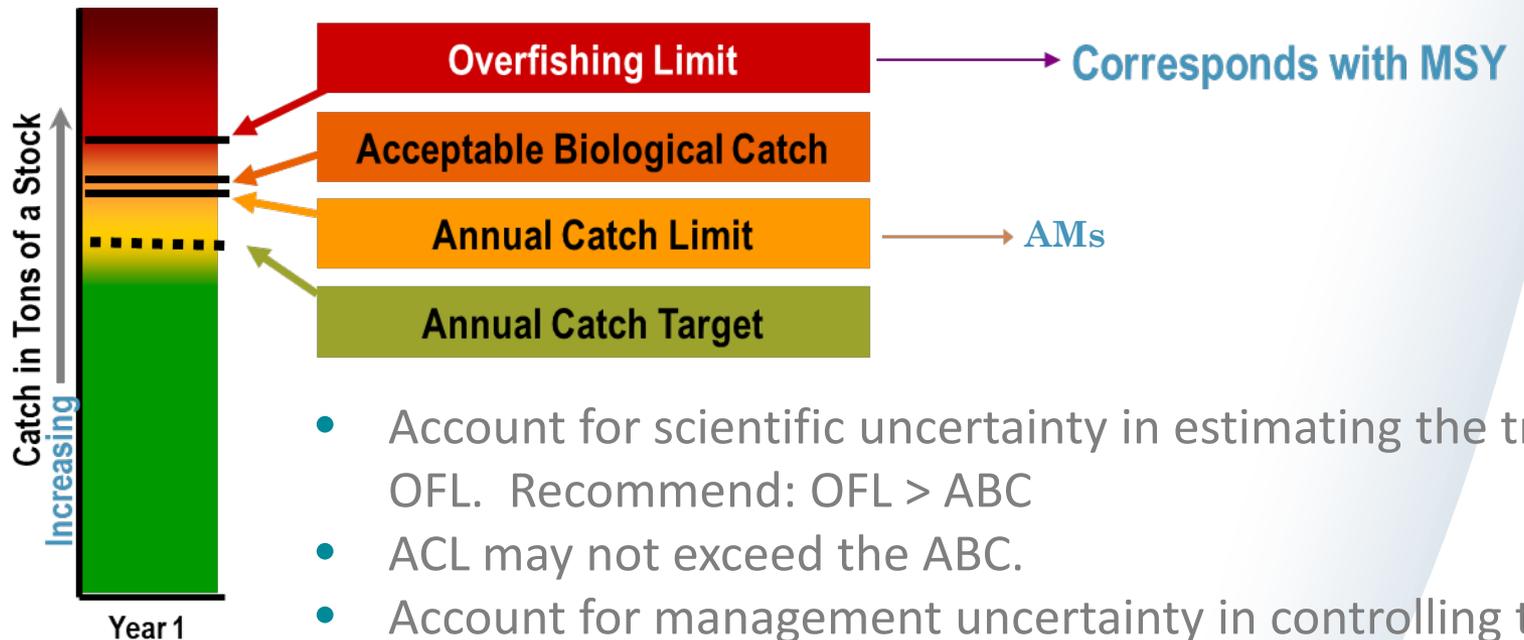
Q: Accountability measures must deduct ACL overages the following year



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Know Your Reference Points

OFL \geq ABC \geq ACL \geq ACT

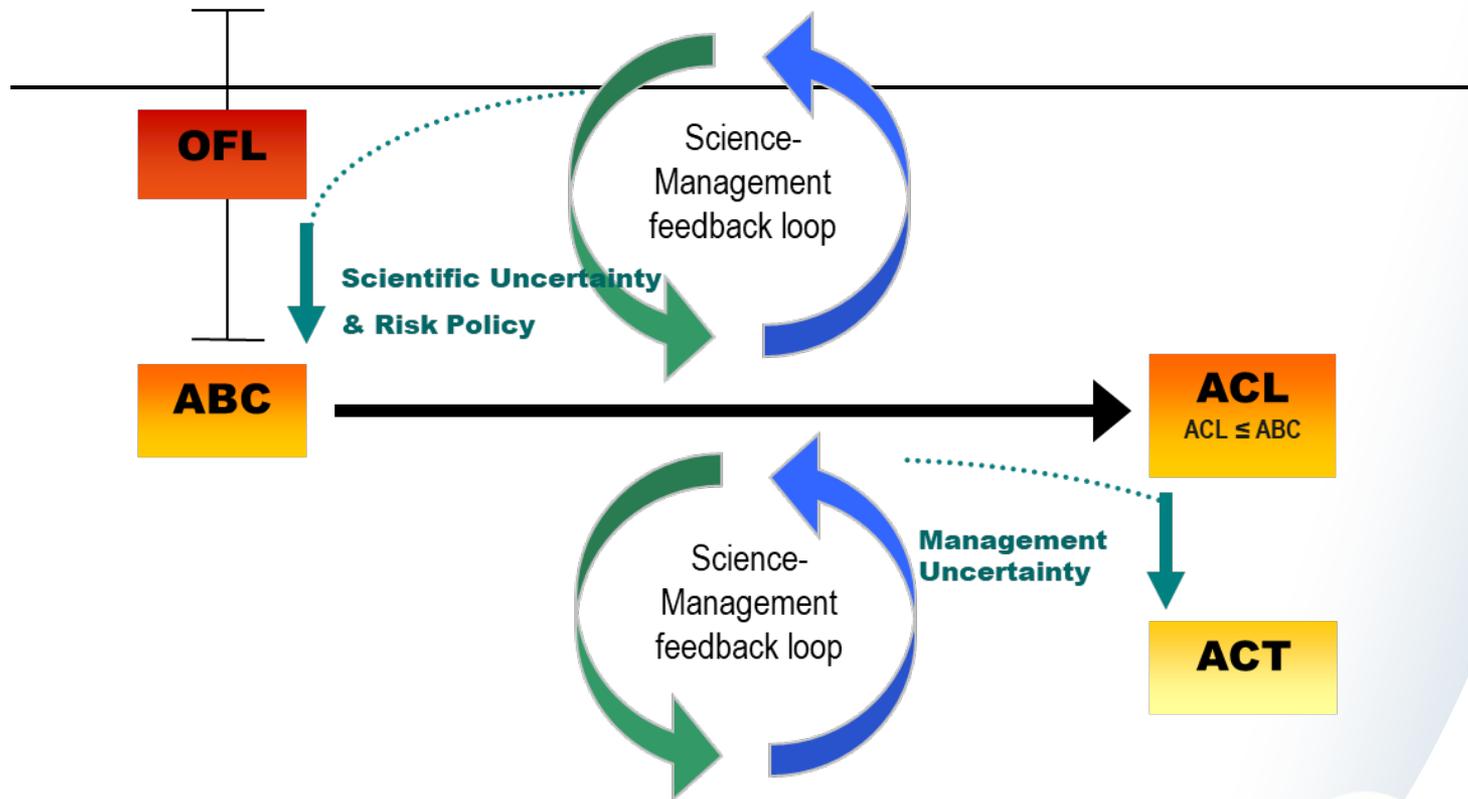


- Account for scientific uncertainty in estimating the true OFL. Recommend: $OFL > ABC$
- ACL may not exceed the ABC.
- Account for management uncertainty in controlling the actual catch to the target. For example: $ACL > ACT$

Roles in Setting ACLs

SSC Role

Council Role



Assessing the Risk of Overfishing

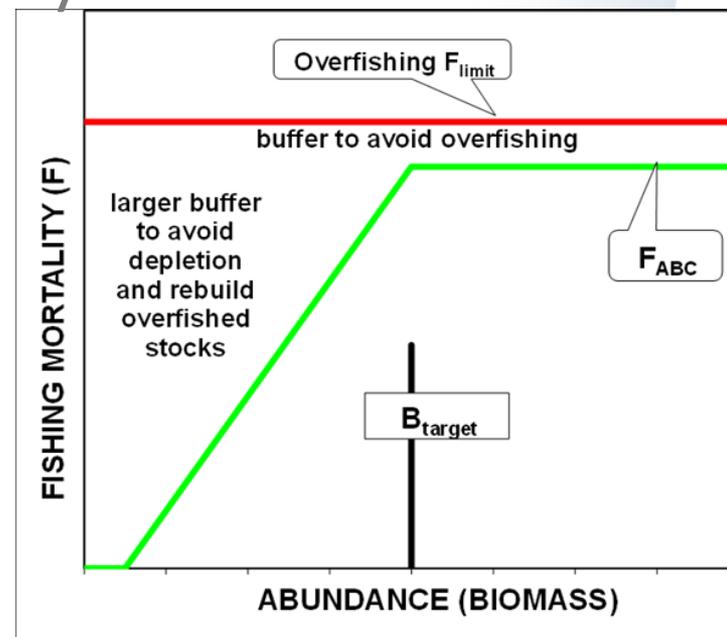
- ACL = “*such that overfishing does not occur*”
- Managers establish policy
 - In consultation with SSC
 - Used in specifying ABC such that there is an acceptably low risk that overfishing will occur
- ABC control rule
Scientific uncertainty & risk policy



ABC Control Rule

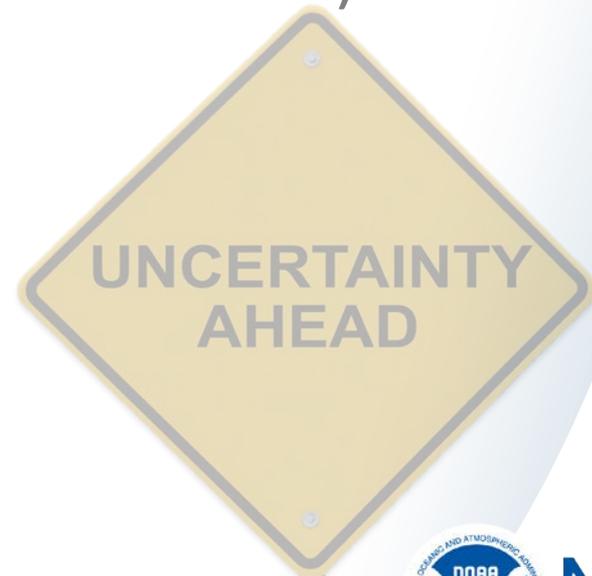
- Scientific Uncertainty and Risk Policy

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



Management Uncertainty

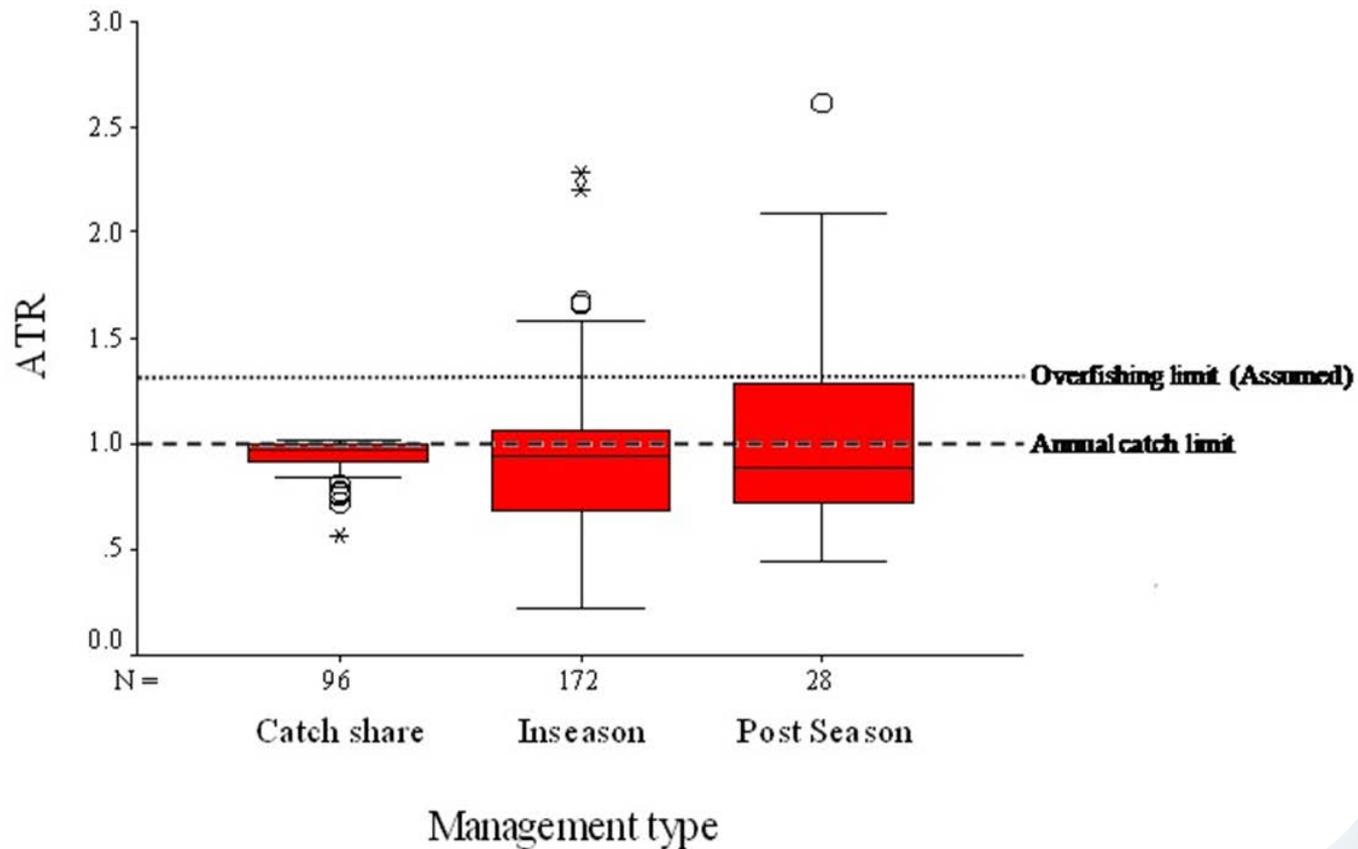
- The ability of managers to constrain catch so that the ACL is not exceeded,
- and
- The uncertainty in quantifying the true catch amounts (i.e., estimation errors).



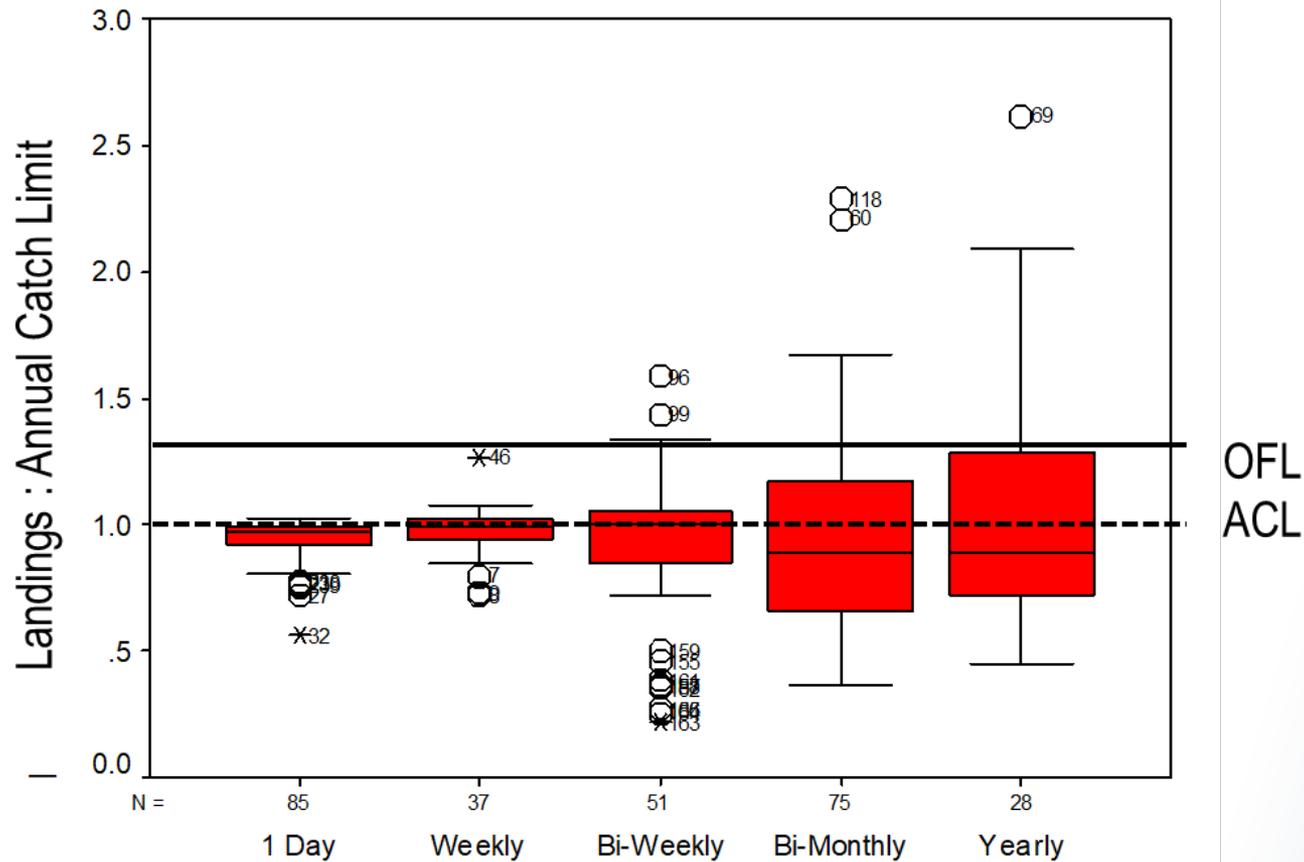
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Management Uncertainty

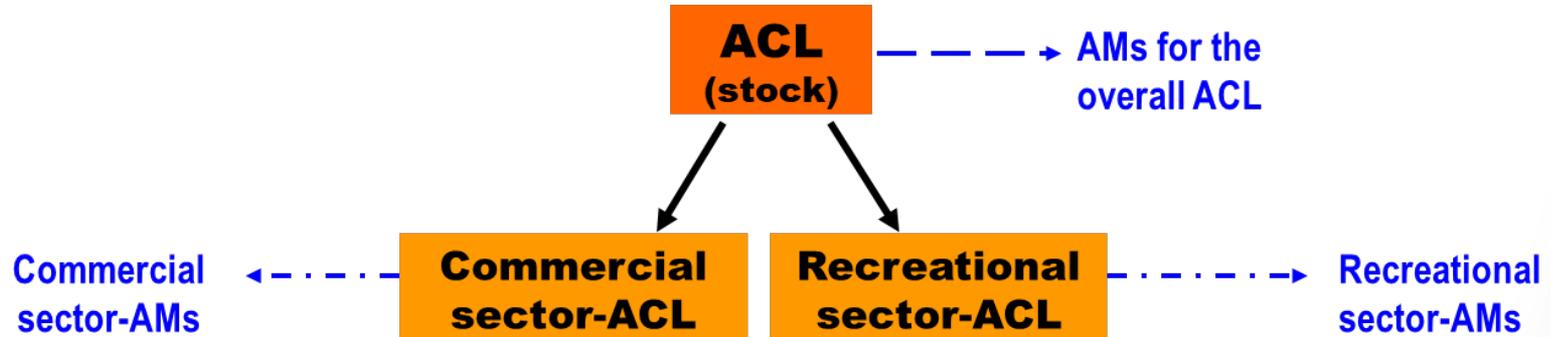
- By management type



Management Uncertainty - by reporting frequency



Allocations - Sectors



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

Quiz Time!

Q: Which of these is NOT a source of management uncertainty?

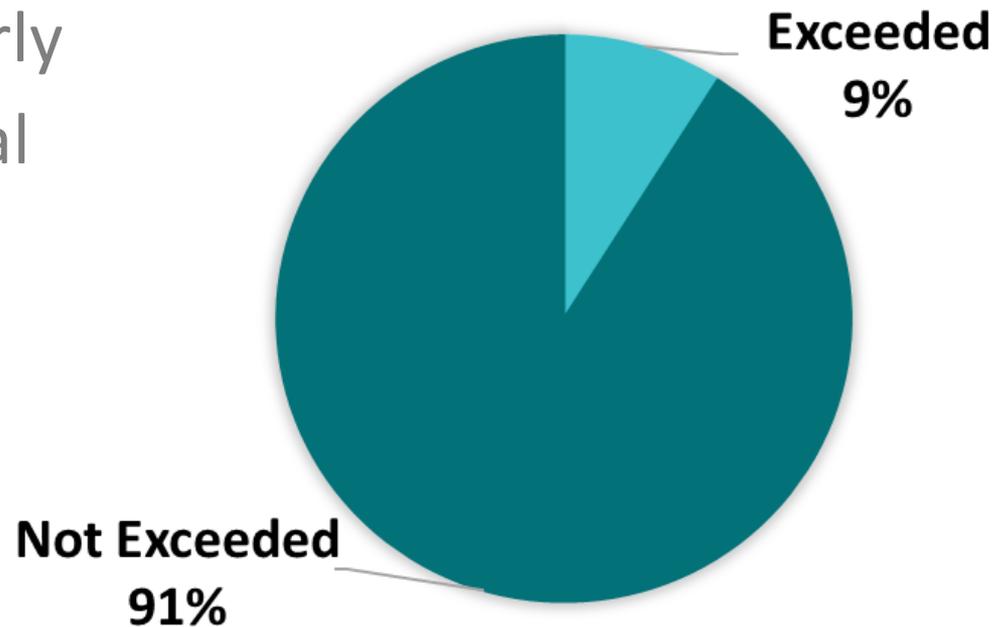
- a. Management program type
- b. Estimated discard mortality
- c. Reporting frequency



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Tracking ACL Performance

- % ACLs not exceeded
- Reporting to NOAA
- Ongoing
- Quarterly
- National



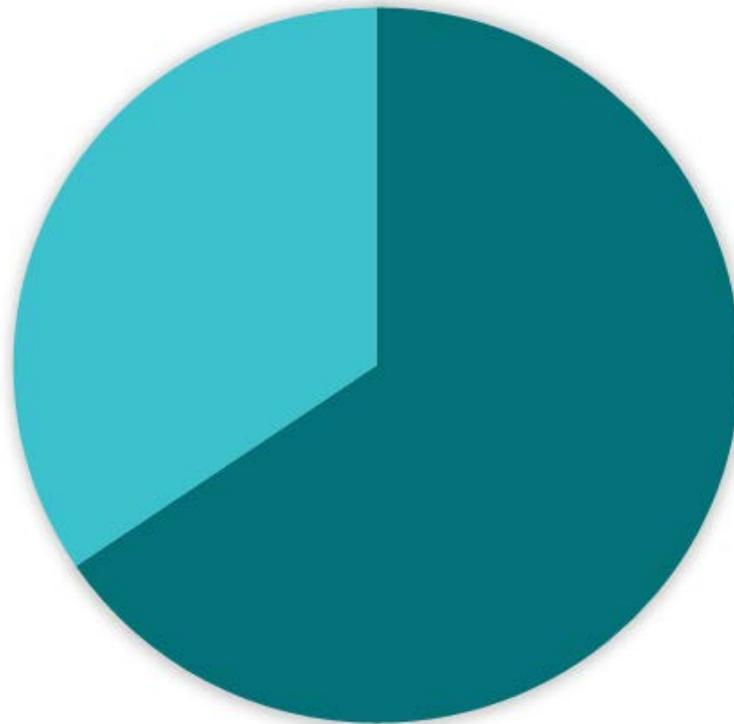
Performance Standards

- Uncertainty = chance of overfishing
- To prevent overfishing:
 - Re-evaluate and modify
 - ACLs and AM systems
 - If ACL is exceeded more than 1 in 4 years
 - Use a higher performance standard
 - If stock is particularly vulnerable to effects of overfishing



Performance Standards - through June 2019

Exceeded ACL, did
not trigger PS
(34%; N = 10)



Exceeded ACL,
triggered PS
(66%; N = 19)

Quiz Time!

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

- a. True
- b. False



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Objectives review

- describe requirements

- MSA Requires
 - ACLs and AMs
 - To end and prevent overfishing
 - In all managed fisheries
 - Unless exempted – 2 exceptions
 - ACLs may not exceed SSC recommendations
 - AMs
 - Prevent ACL overages and address any overages



Objectives Review

- Clearly account for uncertainty
 - Scientific and management
- ABC Control Rules
 - Account for scientific uncertainty
 - Incorporate Council's risk policy
- Performance Standard
 - Address assumptions in ACL setting to prevent chronic overfishing



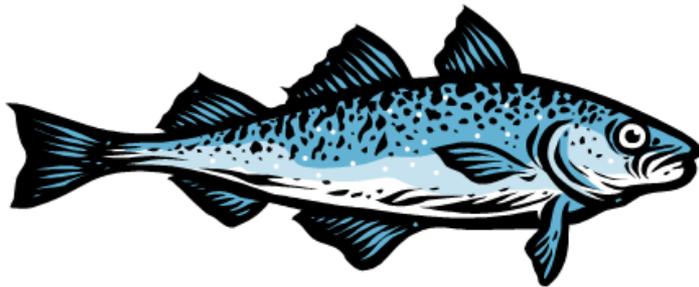
Objectives review

- demonstrate skills in a test fishery

Group exercise - Given the data, set an ACL

Scenario 1 – Yellow-eye cod

Data Rich



Scenario 2 – Shadow shark

Data Poor

