

Progress of the Blueline Tilefish Working Group

March 2018

Scott Crosson, Chair

SEDAR 50 assessed Blueline Tilefish stock from FL Keys to NY

Assessed FL to Hatteras using Production Model

Able to get stock status and ABC for this area

Assessed Hatteras north using data limited methods

Data gaps

Changes in fishery late in the time series

No stock status, ABC is for entire area from Hatteras north

Councils want to manage within their jurisdictions

Need separate ABCs for Hatteras to NC-VA border and VA north

Members

From SAFMC SSC: Scott Crosson, George Sedberry, Robert Ahrens

From MAFMC SSC: John Boreman, Yan Jiao, Michael Frisk

From NOAA: Nikolai Klibansky, Paul Nitschke

From MAFMC Council Staff: Matt Seeley, Brandon Muffley

From SAFMC Council Staff: Mike Errigo, John Carmichael

Mike Schmidte (MAFMC under contract)

Terms of Reference

1. Develop a process for coordinating ABC recommendations from both SSCs for the portion of the blueline tilefish stock north of Cape Hatteras.
2. Decide on which data sets are most appropriate to use to develop ABCs for both areas. This includes both catch and biological data, specific to each area if possible.
3. Decide on the appropriate methodology or methodologies for developing ABCs based on the available data for each spatial region.
4. Propose ABC recommendations for the two SSCs.

Progress

1. The group decided that landings histories were not indicative of stock distribution. Wide fluctuations from year to year in different areas due to changing regulatory structure. This was the same conclusion reached by the Review Panel of SEDAR 50.
2. Group considered the use of the fishery independent results of the SUNY-Stonybrook sampling (Frisk et al 2018). The largest samples of blueline were found in the areas surrounding the Council jurisdictional boundary, which is where the fishery is largely located.

Conclusions

1. Rerun the DLMTool runs for the area of north of Cape Hatteras with some minor modifications, primarily using a shorter time series (2002-2015) to reduce the high coefficient of variation (CV). The working group agreed that the mode of the TAC distribution from the runs would be the total ABC recommendation to the SSCs.
2. Recommend that the SSCs split the ABC by weighting not sampled by the survey in the south and for the slight mismatch in the survey strata boundary at the VA/NC border. After these adjustments, stratified proportional estimates of blueline tilefish caught north and south of the Virginia-North Carolina border result in an allocation of 56% of the north of Cape Hatteras ABC to the MAFMC and 44% to the SAFMC.