

DETERMINE SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS OF FISHING AND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Problem Statement

Because of severe restrictions on fishing quotas, there is a tremendous need for economic analyses of management options and development of long-term strategies for economically viable management approaches.

Critical Factors

- Many groundfish stocks have been overfished and are in severe decline.
- In order to rebuild these stocks, management measures may continue to reduce the availability of particular stocks to fishers.
- Better economic data and analyses are needed to fully consider the economic impacts or costs of these management options.
- Economic analyses of management options also are needed to develop improved management regimes and assist economically depressed communities.

Status of Research

Statutory requirements dictate that research must be conducted on the potential socioeconomic impacts resulting from proposed and potential fishery management practices. Severe declines in a number of West Coast groundfish stocks necessitate that measures be implemented to maintain the total catch of designated species within established biological limits while achieving a fair distribution of economic benefits from that resource. To this end, researchers at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFS) are analyzing information on current and historical operating costs and activity patterns of various constituent groups involved in the fishing industry (e.g., commercial fishers and processing centers). A new researcher with expertise in economics has been added to the Division staff and will be focusing initially on this task. The Center, via collaboration with the academic community, is researching the role economic incentives will play in reducing bycatch in the groundfish fishery.

Future Considerations

As additional funding becomes available, NWFS researchers will develop new economic models and analyses that can provide additional input into the Pacific Fishery Management Council decision-making process and assist in completion of required regulatory reviews. It is expected that another economist will be hired in the first quarter of 2003. However, additional staff will be needed to analyze social and anthropological information.

Key Players

Fishery Resource Analysis & Monitoring (FRAM) Division, NWFS

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
Pacific Fishery Management Council
University of Washington
Oregon State University

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