



NOAA
FISHERIES

Communication, Outreach and Performance Tracking

Office of Science & Technology

Stock Assessment Science Program Review

September 9-12, 2014 – Silver Spring, MD

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Kate Naughten, Director of NMFS Office of Communications

National Marine Fisheries Service

Outline

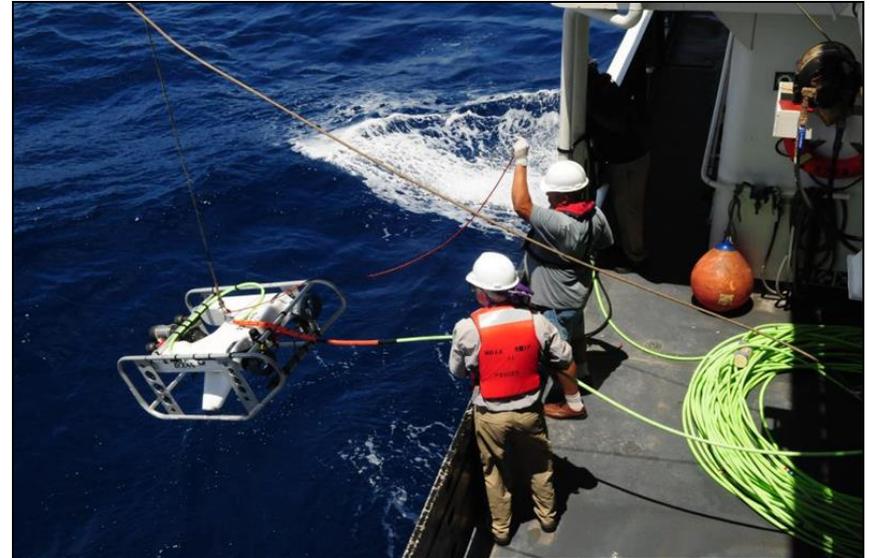
- **Public Perceptions of Fisheries' Stock Assessments**
- **National-level Communication Office View**
- **National-level Comms Efforts**
- **Opportunities for Improvement**
- **ST Stock Assessment Communication**
 - **Audiences and purpose**
 - **Information gathering, exchanging, presenting**
- **ST Stock Assessment Outreach Tools**
- **Tracking National Stock Assessment Performance**
- **Strengths, Challenges, Solutions**



Current perceptions

Current public perceptions of Fisheries' stock assessments:

- They are easy
- They are too complex and impossible to explain
- They provide an absolute measure of stock health
- They are not as important as the harvest numbers



Status of relations between program and Communications Office:

- Improving but still under-utilized (strategic planning)

National-level Communications' View

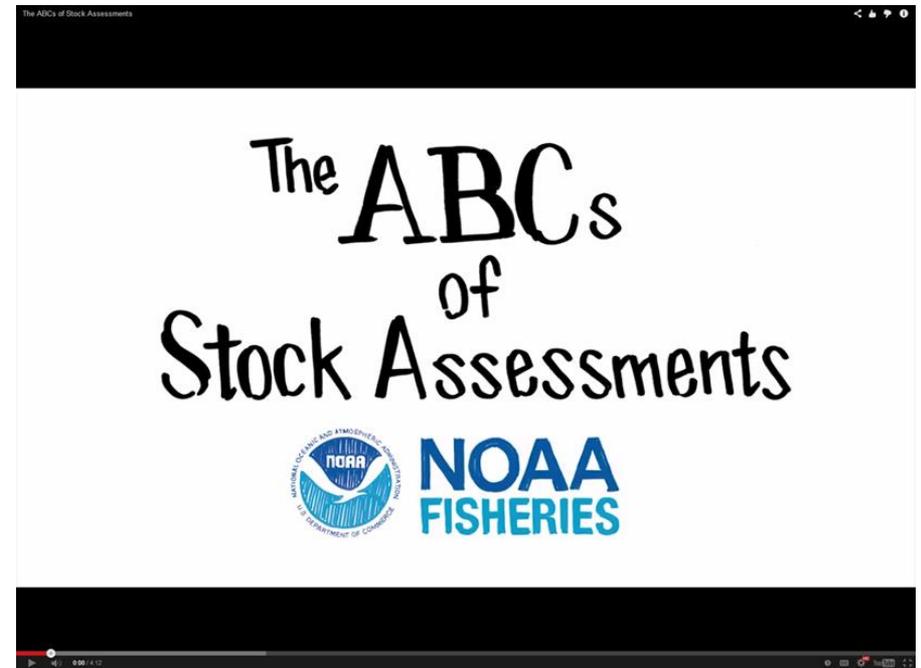
- We can effectively communicate the complex science surrounding stock assessments ... including communicating uncertainties.
- It takes time, effort, and expertise, but it is an accomplishable goal.
- We have the tools to do so: plain language, analogies, and graphics.
- We are the 'translators'.
- It would be a missed opportunity **NOT** to build our credibility and help our target audiences understand the value of our work.



National-level Comms Efforts

Products and tactics:

- Develop stories (Rich Press)
- Produce videos and animations (Stock Assessments 101)
- Provide plain language and infographics
- Capitalize on opportunities: Hill briefings, funding MREP
- Teacher At Sea



Stock Assessment Landing Page

Search NMFS Site [GO!](#)



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Fishery Stock Assessments—It's All About the Science

NOAA Fisheries' scientific stock assessments are critical to modern fisheries management. Using data gathered from commercial and recreational fishermen and our own on-the-water scientific observations, a stock assessment describes the past and current status of a fish population or stock, answers questions about the size of the stock, and makes predictions about how a fishery will respond to current and future management measures.

Learn more! Watch the video: [The ABC's of Stock Assessments >>>](#)

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Don't know the first thing about stock assessments? Get the basics with our **Stock Assessments 101** series:

- 1 – Data Required to Assess Fish Stocks
- 2a – Stock Assessment Models
- 2b – More About Models
- 3 – Ecosystem Factors
- 4 – Future of Stock Assessments



Want to learn more? Dive deeper into our regional assessment reports, publications, and resources.

[Stock Assessments in Depth](#)
[Quarterly Fish Stock Reports](#)
[Status of U.S. Fisheries](#)

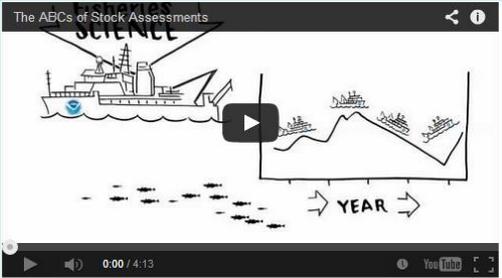
Meet Dr. Rick Methot, Chief Science Advisor for Stock Assessments
 –Read his chapter in *The Future of Fisheries Science*. [EXIT](#)



Let us make the world of fishery stock assessments even more interesting. Check out our stories, videos, and more!

[Story: Behind the Scenes—A NOAA Fisheries Research Expedition](#)
[Story: Fishery Data, On the Double](#)
[Story: Have Your Hake and Eat It Too](#)
[Video: Surveying Bottomfish in Hawaii](#) [EXIT](#)
[Video: On the Water Science](#) [EXIT](#)
[Video: Sablefish Longline Survey](#) [EXIT](#)
[Podcast: A Changing Climate in Fisheries Management](#)
[Podcast: Keeping an Eye on Pollock](#)
[Blog: Teacher on a Mission—Pollock Acoustic Survey](#)

The ABC's of Stock Assessments



0:00 / 4:13

Opportunities for Improvement

- Develop & implement a strategic plan for stock assessment comms, to include:
 - Streamlining internal communications (i.e. include an 'advance notification' step)
 - Plan for and act on high-value opportunities for engagement (i.e. Hill)

The screenshot displays a YouTube video player for the video 'Field Update: Surveying Bottomfish in Hawaii' by NOAA Fisheries. The video is currently at 0:17 of a 1:50 duration. The channel name 'NOAA Fisheries' is visible, along with a 'Subscribe' button showing 738 subscribers and a view count of 89 views. Below the video, the publication date is 'Jun 18, 2014' and the description reads: 'How do we count fish in Hawaii? One way NOAA Fisheries does this is by using Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs) with special cameras that capture underwater video in 3D. In the lab, scientists can review the video to count and measure the fish.' To the right of the video player is a sidebar with a 'Sustainable Fisheries/Seafood' playlist containing 2/20 videos. The playlist includes videos such as 'Field Update: Surveying Bottomfish in Hawaii', 'Recompression Devices: Helping Anglers Fish Smarter', 'Sustainable Seafood - A U.S. Success Story', 'Get to Know Your Seafood from Ocean to Plate', 'The ABCs of Stock Assessments', 'Meet Bob Keese, Scallop', and 'Protecting Our Seafood and Marine Resources'. Below the playlist are three more video recommendations: 'Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2014', 'Renewed Passage: Buzzards Bay to the Acushnet River', and 'Healthy Habitat: The Foundation of America's Seafood and Fisheries'.

ST Stock Assessment Communication

Internal Audiences:

- Science Board
- NMFS Strategic Planners
- NMFS Budget Administrators
- Stock assessment scientists
- NMFS Leadership

External Audiences:

- Congress
- Budget Administrators (NOAA/DOC/OMB)
- Stakeholders
- Fishery Management Councils
- Public

Goal: Internal and External Understanding and Support for NMFS Stock Assessment Activities

Internal Audiences

- Science Board → National science priorities; Feedback and guidance on activities; Emerging issues
- NMFS Strategic Planners → Regular input into strategic plans
- NMFS Budget Administrators → Justifications for our investments; budget increase requests
- Stock assessment scientists → Sharing of information on new methods, best practices, standardized approaches, etc
- NMFS Leadership → National stock assessment capabilities, priorities, gaps, needs, and performance

External Audiences

- Congress
 - Budget Administrators (NOAA/DOC/OMB)
- } Justifications for our past/current/future investments; Understanding of our stock assessment activities and quality of science being produced; Requests for budget increases.
- Stakeholders → Counter criticisms and misinformation; describe activities, priorities and emerging gaps/needs they can support
 - Fishery Management Councils → Educate them on stock assessments, quality of our science and how they can use it in their management decisions.
 - Public → What are stock assessments (101, data summaries), current activities, quality of science, programmatic vision.

Questionnaire: Feedback on Communication From Center Directors

- The stock assessment reporting and communication conducted by ST accurately represents the stock assessment enterprise and communicates program needs both within the agency and to key stakeholders.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Familiar
2		2	1	1	

Questionnaire: Center Director Comments

- Strongly Agree: No comment.
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: The agency has been very effective in communicating stock assessment needs with Congress and the Administration.... **Not clear on ST's role in communication to key stakeholders.**
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: The fisheries stock assessment reporting process is mature and does a fair job of communicating our fisheries stock assessment enterprise We are **less clear about how the fisheries stock assessment reporting process communicates our program needs within the agency and to stakeholders.**
- Disagree: The metrics are too coarse to reflect changes in stock assessment efficiency or improvements. **Additional metrics are needed.**
- Strongly Disagree: The recent GAO report highlights the **lack of adequate representation of assessment capacities** within the agency.

Information about Stock Assessments

- National Stock Assessment Capabilities
- National Priorities
- National Performance
- National Gaps and Resource Needs

**Unique advantage:
Same building as NMFS leadership!**

Internal Platforms for Exchange

Regular Interactions

- NMFS leadership - Science Board, Chief Scientist, NMFS Senior Scientists
- Lead stock assessment scientists across centers

Technical Input/Advice - NMFS Budget, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

- Continuous communication and collaboration throughout planning-budgeting-execution-evaluation processes.
- Scientific advice on policy decisions (e.g., MSRA, NS1, NS2, HMS Management)
- Collaborative responses to external and Congressional questions

Internal Platforms for Exchange

Stock Assessment Communications Forum

- Exchange information on assessment and survey activities, workshops, National developments, ideas, concerns, etc.
- Promote cross-regional collaborations
- Monthly conference calls, Google site

Stock Assessments Communication Forum Updated Jul 18, 2014, 11:05 AM

Search this site

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National Updates
Center Activity Highlights - July 2014
Workshop Calendar
Tasks & Actions
File Cabinet

Site owners
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ums hg1 - NOAA Service Account
Jul Libraco - NOAA Federal

Helpful Links
How to change this sidebar

Stock Assessments Communication Forum

Welcome to the Stock Assessments Communication Forum Workspace. This site seeks to encourage increased exchange of information on latest stock assessment and survey activities, workshops, ideas and concerns.

National Updates

- SAT Assessment Program Review - Questionnaire** In preparation for the Office of Science and Technology's FY14 assessment program review (September 9-12 in Silver Spring, MD), SAT has sent out a survey) to the ...
Posted Jul 24, 2014, 6:45 AM by Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal
- AST regional workshops & program alignment** Request engagement of folks from various survey and assessment working groups to participate in AST regional workshops. Seeking alignment of AST planning, assessment methods and prioritization efforts, and in the ...
Posted Jul 18, 2014, 9:21 AM by Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal
- RFPs** There are attempts to align the announcements and timelines of multiple SAT RFPs to assure that the proposals are being submitted to the ideal venue, and that duplicate funding ...
Posted Jul 18, 2014, 9:19 AM by Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal
- SAT assessment program review** The Office of Science and Technology's FY14 assessment program review will be held September 9-12 in Silver Spring, MD - SAT will send a survey to each ...
Posted Jul 23, 2014, 2:19 PM by Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal
- GAO Review** GAO review of stock assessment program was completed and the results were presented to the Congressional representatives that requested the review. Congress has not yet decided if the review should ...
Posted Jul 18, 2014, 9:18 AM by Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal

Showing posts 1 - 5 of 5. [View posts >](#)

Tasks & Actions

Lead	Description	Due Date	Complete
Richard Methot	Follow-up on MRE about death sample size across centers	July 25, 2014	Complete
Richard Methot	Naming regional POCs for the AST-assessment-survey regional workshops	July 25, 2014	
Kathleen Wynter	Develop Activity Highlights Page with upload options	June 25, 2014	✓
Kathleen Wynter	Find way of doing live editing of google doc off the site	June 25, 2014	✓

Showing 4 items from page [Tasks & Actions](#) sorted by Due Date. [View more >](#)

Meeting Minutes

TITLE	LAST MODIFIED
Agenda & Meeting Notes - July 24 2014	Jul 24 Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal
Agenda & Meeting Notes - June 26th 2014-FINAL	Jun 27 Patrick Lynch - NOAA Federal
Agenda & Meeting Notes - May 8th 2014	Jun 30 Kathleen Wynter - NOAA Federal
MeetingNotes_06-14-13	8/15/13 Patrick Lynch - NOAA Federal
MeetingNotes_12-5-13_Final	12/6/13 Paul Rago - NOAA Federal

External Communications/Presentations

Administration and Congressional Briefings

- Inform new/acting staff (DOC/OMB/Congress)
 - Stock assessment 101
- Communicate assessment priorities, gaps and resource needs to leadership and Congress

Reporting Program Performance (past/present/future)

- Annual Performance Plans (presented to OMB)
- Quarterly Congressional stock assessment updates (starts Q1 FY15)

External Communications/Presentations

Communications with the Councils

- Stock assessment presentations at Council trainings
- Regular updates to the Council Coordination Committee
- Coordination with National Scientific and Statistical Committee

Responses to Stakeholder and Congressional Inquiries – Major Effort!

- NGOs, Congress, NOAA/DOC/OMB, etc

ST Outreach Tools

Stock Assessment Website

- Stock assessment basics (101)
 - Assessment inputs, models, ecosystem considerations, and future vision
- Links to publications
 - Assessment reports, National publications, assessment and management resources
- Species Information System Public Portal

www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/stock-assessment

ST Outreach Tools

Species Information System (SIS) Public Portal

- Sources from password protected SIS database
- Interactive, up-to-date summaries of NMFS assessments (FSSI stocks)
 - Mapping tool by jurisdiction
 - Summary graphics for all FSSI stocks
 - Stock-specific results with access to time series data

<https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/sisPortal/sisPortalMain.jsp>

Performance Tracking & Reporting - Mandate

Government Performance and Results Modernization Act (GPRA-MA) 2010

- Long-term priority goals (4yrs)
- Performance plans (2yrs)
 - Annual goals and performance targets
 - Quarterly performance targets and milestones
- Quarterly priority progress reviews
- Performance reports

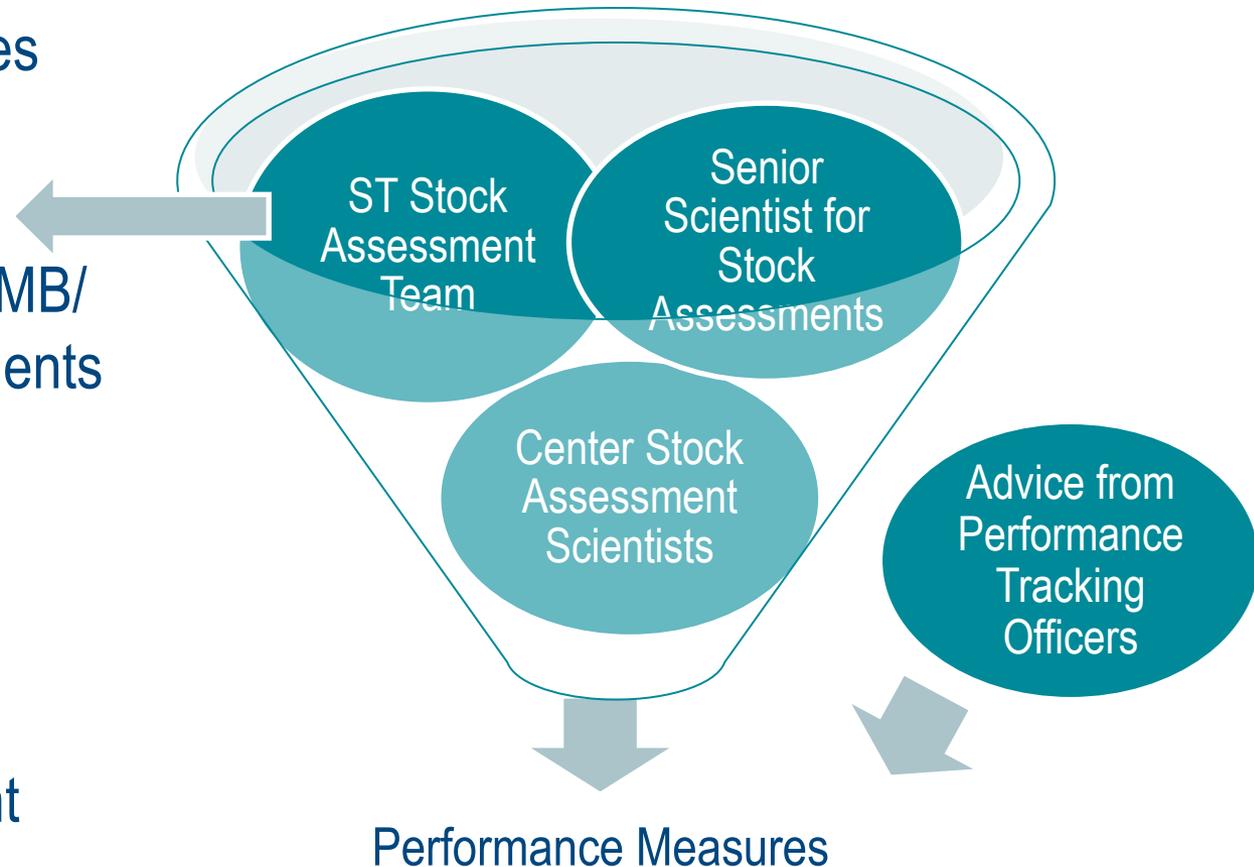
Increased accountability & transparency for government programs

Useful tool for responding to stakeholder inquiries

Performance Tracking & Reporting – ST’s Role

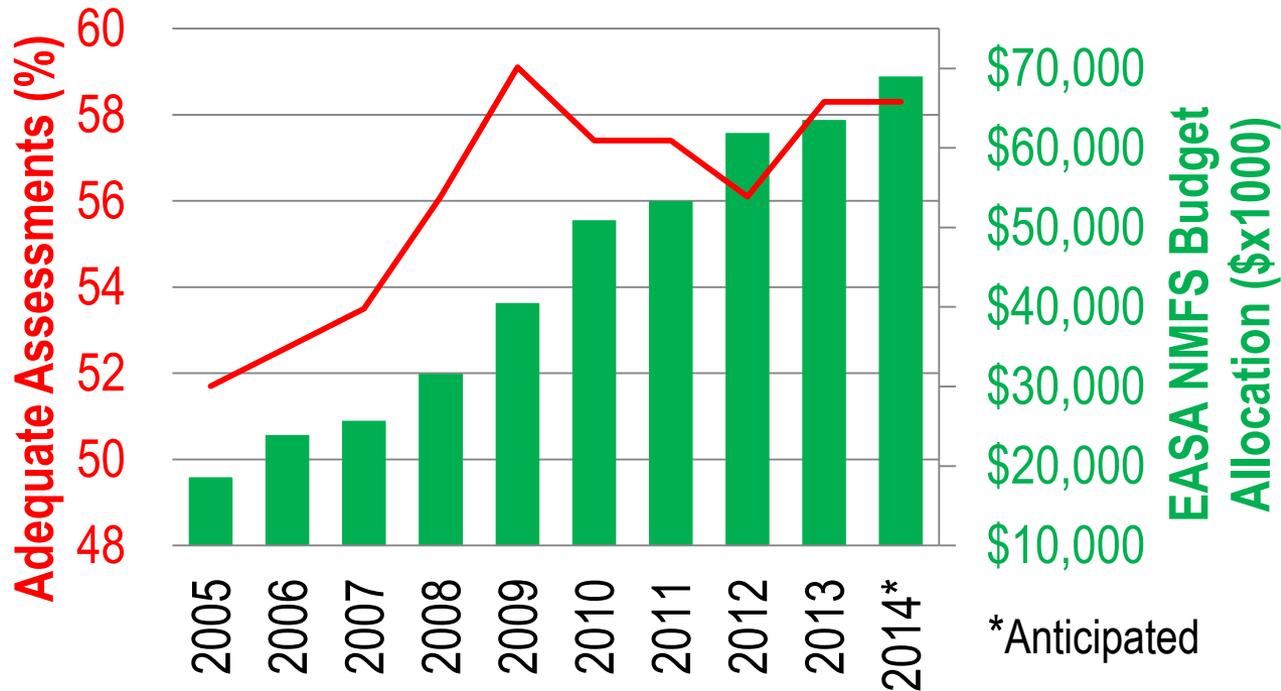
Performance Measures (National)

- Initiate process
- Develop business rules
- Develop targets for inclusion in NMFS/NOAA/DOC/OMB/ Congressional documents
- Track progress
 - SIS
- Report on actuals (quarterly/annually)
 - Stock Assessment Quarterly Reports



Current Performance Measure

Percent FSSI Stocks with Adequate Assessments



- Only for FSSI stocks
- Measures stocks with/without adequate level (old SAIP)
- Lacks budget sensitivity
- Arbitrary erosion to base to account for increases costs
- Not influenced by prioritization or new SAIP target attributes

Stock Assessment Quarterly Reports

- Assessments completed last quarter
- Assessments completed this quarter
- Level of completed assessments
- Anticipated end of year totals
- Feature highlights (eg. Prioritization process)
- Stock-specific details

<https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/stock-assessment/FishStockReports/index>

Milestones and Anticipated Accomplishments

- ST-level stock assessment program progress
 - Eg. Completing RFP processes, completion of Stock Assessment Improvement Plan (SAIP) workshop.
- National-level stock assessment program progress
 - Eg. Provide updated fishery stock assessment reports to regional and international management agencies, conduct benchmark or updated assessments for fish stocks, including highly-migratory species managed internationally

- Strategic planning documents
- Annual Operating Plan (AOP)
- Quarterly review process

Strengths

- Communication –strong connection to centers, planning and budgeting staff and leadership for gathering, exchanging and presenting of information.
- Outreach - various degrees of information available to the public, from the basics of stock assessments to stock-specific assessment information and time-series data.
- Performance Tracking – streamlined data collection through SIS allowing rigorous tracking of stock assessment information
- Overall – collaborating staff who work to present a unified voice throughout all communications

Challenges

- Communication – Shifting personnel and audiences with varying stock assessment knowledge require frequent re-education; strict time constraints on external inquiries; lack of feedback on whether ST communication is clear and effective
- Outreach - broad audience but limited platforms; no analysis on effectiveness of our outreach tools.
- Performance Tracking – developing budget sensitive performance measures that convey complexity of our stock assessment enterprise; setting outyear targets
- Overall – complex lines of communication with opportunities for breakdown

Solutions

- Communication – improve timely information gather for improved capabilities, gaps, and resource needs analysis; better use of existing communication platforms.
- Outreach - add more outreach tools; explore ways of analyzing efficacy of existing and new tools
- Performance Tracking – continue to explore new ways of tracking national stock assessment performance
- Overall –partner and coordinate better with staff from the NMFS Office of Communications; develop and implement ST stock assessment communication plan



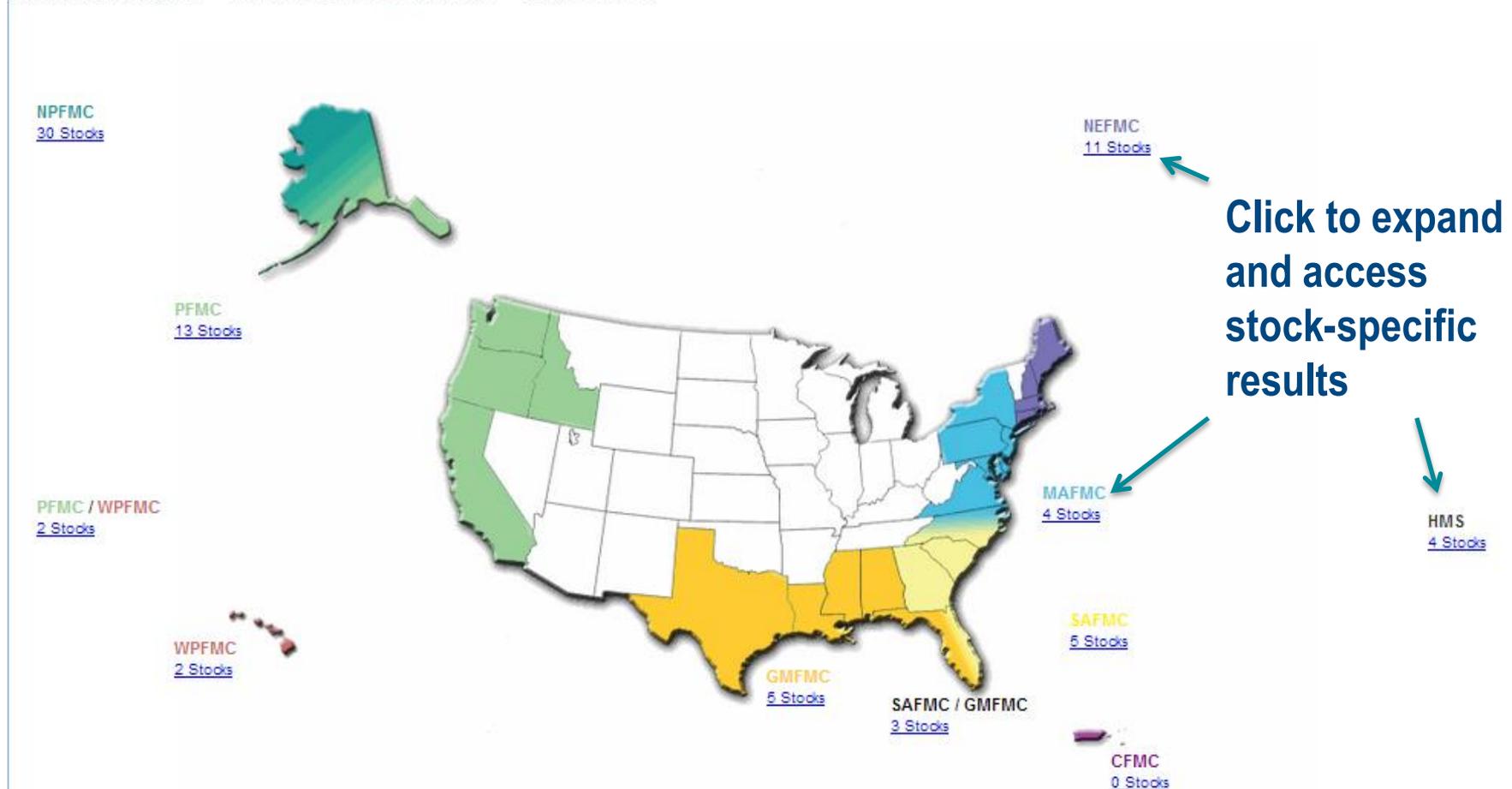
Thank You!



SIS Public Portal

Mapping tools by jurisdiction

The map is displaying: Stocks Assessed by Year 2013 Total: 82 Stocks

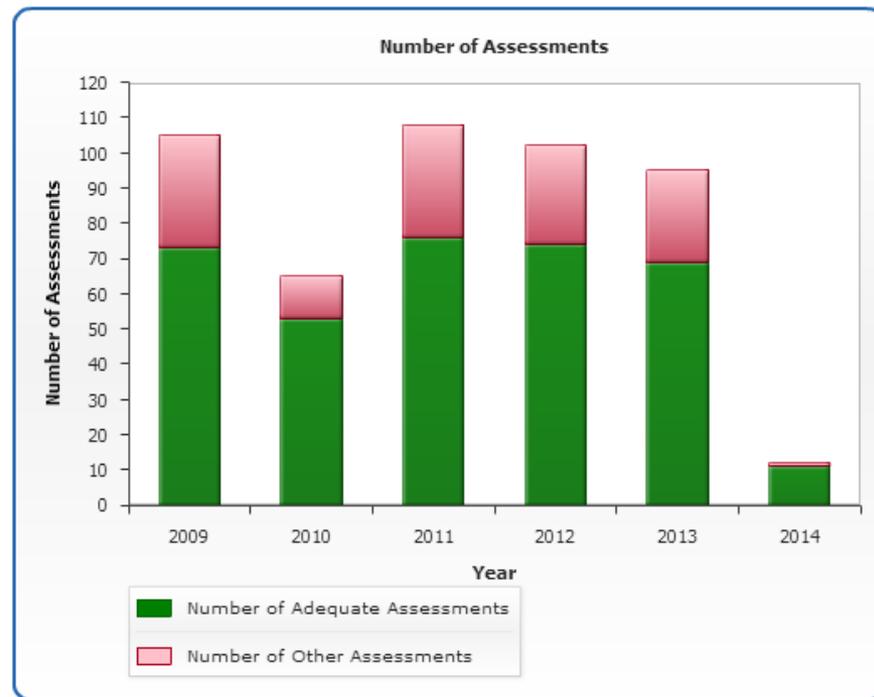
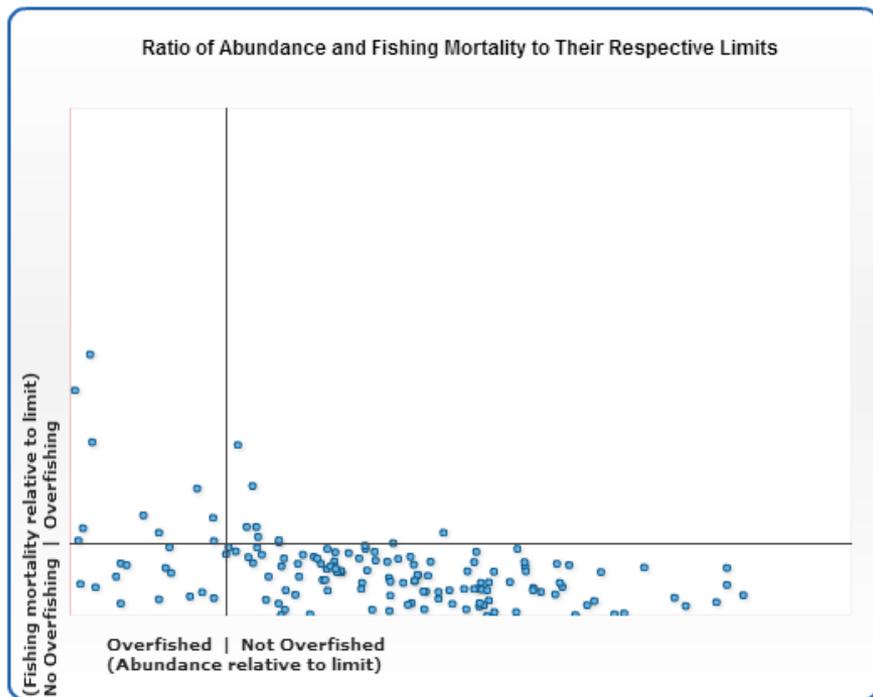


SIS Public Portal

Summary Graphics on all FSSI Stocks

Summary of Assessment Information

Current Information for All FSSI Stock Assessments Combined

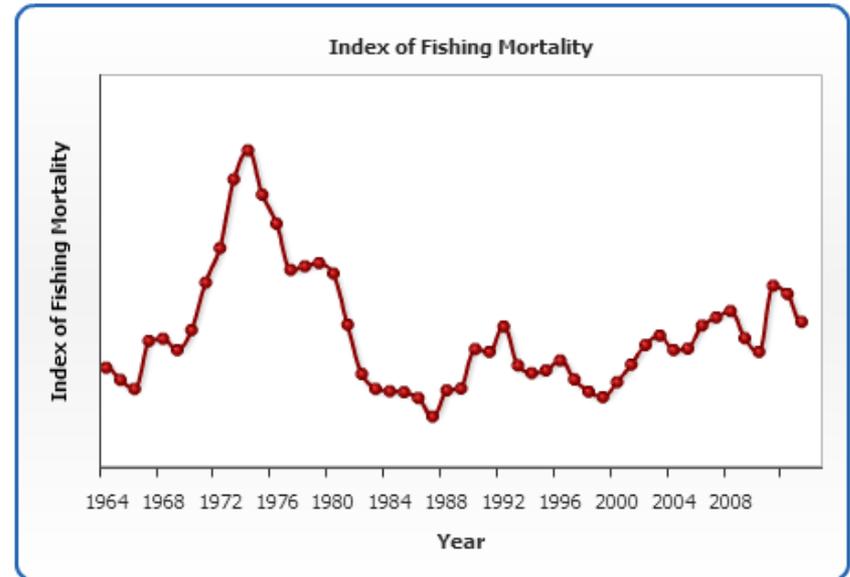
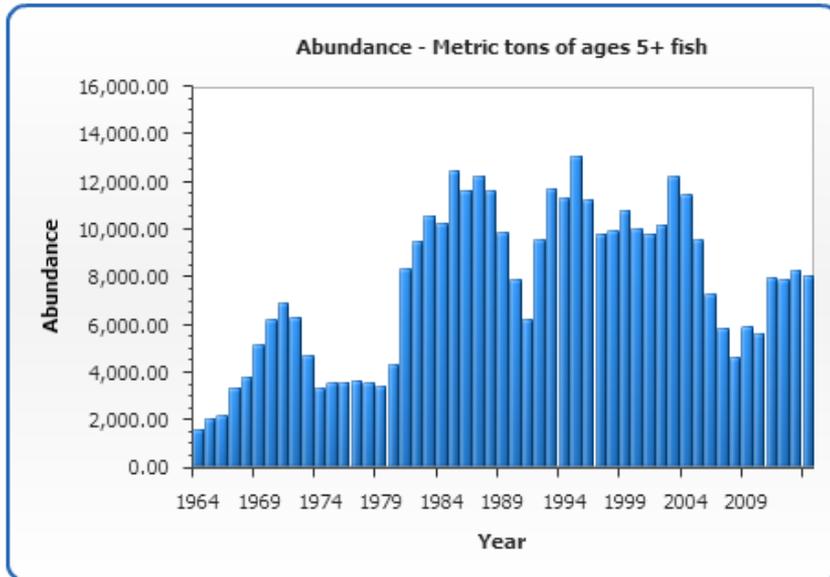


SIS Public Portal

Stock Specific Results with Access to Time Series Data

Stock Name: Walleye pollock - Eastern Bering Sea [Select another Stock](#)

Stock Status	
Overfishing?	No
Overfished?	No
In a Rebuilding Program?	No
Management Action?	NA
Last Assessed?	December, 2013
Download TimeSeries Data	
FishWatch - U.S. Seafood Facts	



New Performance Measures

Desired Characteristics:

- Relates to new SAIP categorization and prioritization protocols
- Focus on meeting stock-specific assessment targets (level/frequency) rather than just yes/no of adequacy
- Sensitive to the budget
- For all Federally-managed fish stocks not just FSSI

Tentative Measures:

Stock Assessment Target Index

(Measures relative progress towards reaching our stock assessment target levels and assessment frequency for all stocks. Would be responsive to incremental improvements in all attributes)

Ecosystem Linkage Target Index

(Measures relative progress towards reaching our goal of including ecosystem linkages in stock assessments where necessary)