

Work Plan for the Pacific Bluefin Working Group¹

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The last meeting of the Pacific Bluefin Working Group (PBF WG) discussed that the next meeting was scheduled in conjunction with 5th ISC Plenary meeting. However, the PBF WG meeting was postponed, because the regular ISC plenary was expected to be held in 2006, but the 5th ISC is irregularly held in 2005.

The stock assessment of PBF in the recent WG have been done mainly by VPA analysis using fisheries data. January 2006 would be better timing for setting the next PBF-WG meeting for the stock assessment effectively due to the data availability. Because the fishing year from July to next June is used for the stock assessment, the fisheries data up to June 2005 including the rapid increase of PBF catch in 2004 will be available in the end of 2005.

More specifically, the one week meeting could be better, which address several issues such as (1) improvements in the Pacific-wide catch-at-age matrix; (2) development of standardized abundance indices and/or fishing effort; (3) refinements of the ADAPT-based assessment; (4) further exploration of the utility of MFCL or other more fully integrated methods for PBF stock assessment, etc.

The NRIFSF would like to offer the next WG meeting place in Shimizu, Japan.