

Science Advisory Process on Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Herring

**Gulf Fisheries Centre
Miramichi Boardrooms
Moncton, New Brunswick
28 – 29 March 2006**

Terms of Reference

Context

The DFO Gulf Oceans and Science Branch reviews the status of the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence spring and fall herring stocks each March in support of management of the fishery. The 2006 RAP review will focus its attention on these resources. In addition, a review of biological and acoustic data collected through collaborative projects with the fishing industry will be conducted to provide advice on the direction and utility of these projects.

Objectives

Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence herring

- Assessment of the status of the spring and fall spawning components of herring in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence including:
 - Information on catches to the end of 2005, including best estimates of total removals by all fisheries.
 - Key indicators of stock status and trends (commercial catch rates and acoustic survey, commercial catch rates, size and/or age composition, etc.).
 - Available information from resource users on recent stock status relative to historical stock levels.
 - Population model (Sequential Population Analysis) unless there are sound reasons why it is inappropriate.
 - Analyses of other key stock status indicators as appropriate.
- For a range of TAC options (steps of 1,000t) in 2006, estimation of the risk that the biomass at the beginning of January 2007 will not achieve various percentages of change compared to January 2006. The percentages to be used will be determined at the meeting.

Review of biological and acoustic data collection from spawning beds

- Review of the methods and results of acoustic data collection using commercial fishing vessels on fall spawning beds.
- Review of the field methods and the analysis of data of catches made using experimental gillnets of various mesh sizes and its possible use as herring abundance index.
- Review results of analyses of biological data collected from fishery samples.
- Where possible, provide comments on the utility of acoustic data collection from fishing vessels and experimental nets for the assessment of herring in the southern Gulf.

Products

CSAS Stock Assessment Report (SAR) for southern Gulf of St. Lawrence spring and fall herring

CSAS Proceedings summarizing the discussion.

CSAS Research Document of the assessment of the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence spring and fall herring

Participation

Participation at the RAP meeting will be solicited from the following:

- DFO Science & Fisheries Management
- Industry