



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfc.org

Tautog Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Subcommittee Conference Call Summary

September 1, 2016

Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Subcommittee Members: Jason McNamee (TC Chair, RI), Lindy Barry (NJ), Nichole Ares (RI), Craig Weedon (MD), Sandy Dumais (NY), Katie May Laumann (VA), Jeff Brust (SAS Chair, NJ), Alexei Sharov (MD)

ASMFC Staff: Katie Drew

LIS Assessment WG: Jacob Kasper (UConn), Eric Schultz (UConn)

The Tautog Technical Committee (TC) and Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) held a joint conference call to develop a standardized protocol for the short-term projections that will be done as part of the assessment update. In addition, the group also discussed some questions regarding ASAP input data and model configuration, and reviewed the update report outline.

For the short-term projections, the TC/SAS decided to use most of the same input data and AGEPRO settings that were used for the long-term BRP projections in the benchmark assessment, but some inputs will be modified to suit the needs of the short-term projections. The protocol that all regions will follow includes:

1. Weight-at-age for the population (SSB, Jan-1, and mid-year) will be the same as used in each regional ASAP model run. WAA for the catch will be the average weight-at-age over the most recent selectivity block.
2. Life history inputs (M, maturity, fraction of F & M before spawning): same as used in ASAP.
3. Fishery selectivity: ASAP's estimate of selectivity-at-age for the last selectivity block
4. Recruitment: 1 model
 - a. SPR-based reference points: Empirical recruitment, time-series of ASAP-estimated recruitment (all years)
 - b. MSY-based reference points: Beverton & Holt relationship, parameters estimated by ASAP
5. Harvest scenario: constant landings
6. Options: do not specify retrospective adjustment factor
7. CVs on input values: some experimentation necessary to identify best values. CVs can be calculated from observed data for some inputs (e.g., catch WAA) or ASAP's estimates of uncertainty on the parameters (e.g., fishery selectivity), but some require expert opinion

8. (e.g., M). Assessment leads will explore different values and the TC/SAS will have another call to review the results and decide on a consensus best value.

Each region will also update the long-term BRP projections to get reference points that are consistent with the updated assessments.

The group discussed incorporating management uncertainty (i.e., the fact that the recreational catch will likely not be the same from year to year even under constant regulations) into the projections. However, AGEPRO does not include this functionality and doing it by hand will take extra time. Given the short timeline of the assessment update, the group decided not to include variability in the catch for this report, but bring it to the Board's attention as a potential source of uncertainty in the projections and ask if they want the group to redo the projections with it included (since they will probably want to see other harvest scenario projections as well).

As people have begun to work on the updates, some questions arose. Issues addressed included:

1. Catch weights-at-age used for ASAP inputs should be developed for every year based on the CAA expansions. Population weights-at-age (SSB, Jan-1) are a single time-constant vector based on age-length and length-weight relationships pooled over all years and should be carried forward from the benchmark input file. Also note that these weights are assumed to be a mid-year weight, since they come from samples collected throughout the year and we do not apply a Jan-1 correction.
2. Index selectivities are assumed to be flat-top logistic curves for all non-YOY indices. YOY indices are lagged forward one year and fit to age-1 abundances.
3. MARI will revisit the index-at-age calculations for the MA trawl and the RI trawl to resolve potential discrepancies and data gaps.
4. Sensitivity runs should not be as extensive as were done for the benchmark. Each region will do a retrospective analysis. Regions that have added a new selectivity period since the benchmark should do a run with and without the new block. Otherwise, regions can pick one or two additional runs to address major sources of uncertainty identified in the benchmark as necessary.
5. The peer review identified a potential discrepancy between the long-term SSB reference points calculated with ASAP and those calculated with AGEPRO for the LIS region. The LIS WG has not been able to definitively identify the cause of this discrepancy but it may have to do with (1) using the stock-recruit curve in ASAP to estimate recruitment instead of the average recruitment and (2) changes to the ASAP model code that the peer review used for those calculation. The group agreed to use the AGEPRO projection methods from the benchmark.
6. MD raised concerns about the extremely low sample size for tautog from MRIP in the most recent years. In one year, only three length bins were represented in the recreational harvest. MD proposed using lengths from the state sampling program to develop the catch-at-age for the MD component of the DMV harvest, but the TC/SAS had

concerns about introducing a new data source in an assessment update. It was agreed that the state biosample data would be used as a sensitivity run for the DMV region.

The group looked at the assessment update report outline and agreed that it was acceptable. The group also reviewed the assessment update timeline (see below). A conference call was added for the week of Sept. 12 to review the CV explorations and any other issues before the report components are due to staff Sep. 22.

2016 Tautog Stock Assessment Update Timeline

✓	Aug 16	TC/SAS Intro Call
✓	Week of Aug 29	TC/SAS Call to discuss projections and selectivity blocks
✓	Sept 1 or Before	Deadline to upload state data to the FTP site
	Week of Sept 12	TC/SAS Call to review CV decisions, other issues
	Sept 22	Deadline for leads to provide assessment text (e.g., paragraphs on assessment and projection results)
	Sept 26	Draft assessment update report distributed to TC/SAS for review
	Week of October 3	TC/SAS call to review assessment update report and results
	October 10	Final assessment update report distributed via Briefing Materials
	October 25	2016 stock assessment update presented to Tautog Board