

Alaska Sablefish Assessment Summary

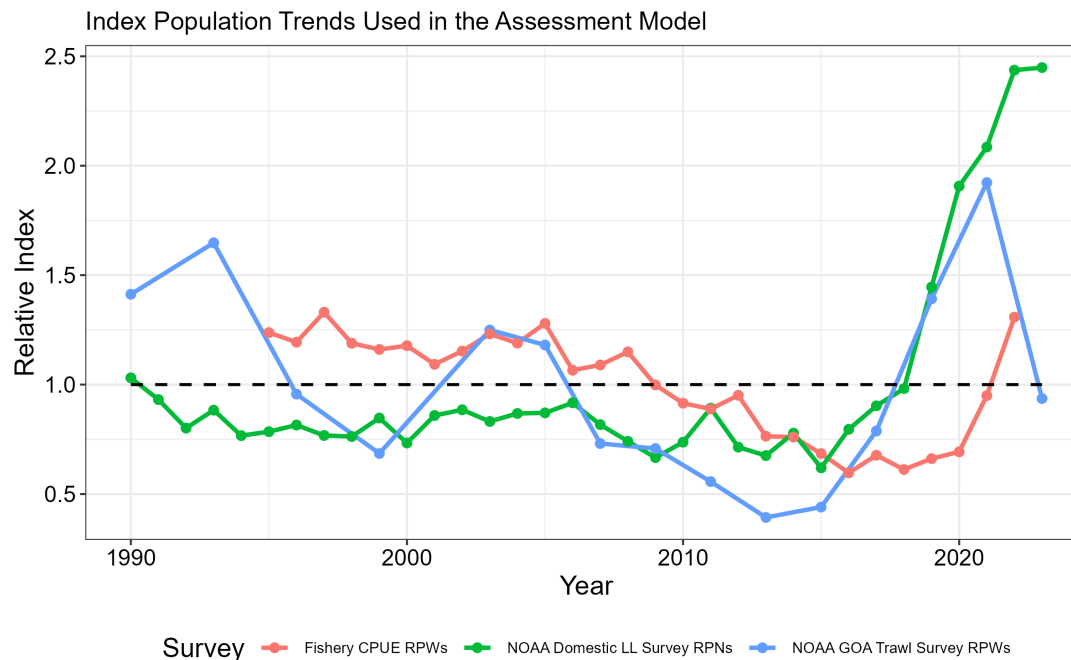
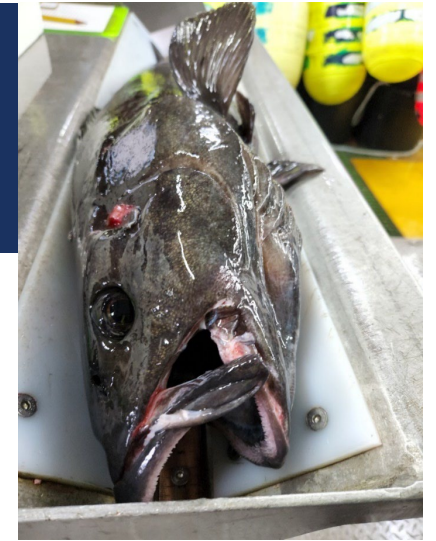
Sablefish Industry Meeting – April 23, 2025

Chris Lunsford, (Dan Goethel), Katy Echave, Pat Malecha
National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Fisheries Science Center
Auke Bay Laboratories
Juneau, AK



Data

- SAFE document can be found at:
 - <https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/SAFE/2024/Sablefish.pdf>
- No new surveys in 2024
 - 2023 trawl survey declines driven by smaller 2020--2021 year classes (juvenile survey)
- Early indications (from observer data) that 2022 year class may be large



LL Survey:
No Survey

CPUE Index:
No Update

Trawl Survey:
Off-year



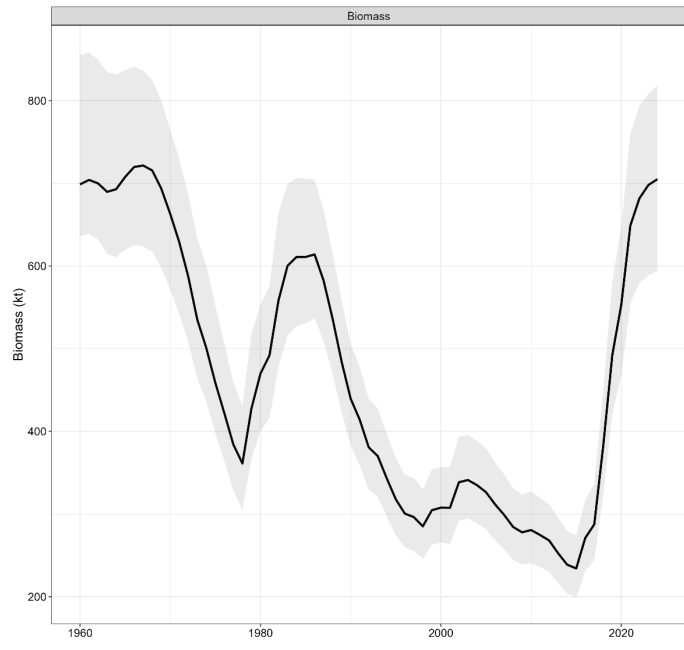
Time Series Trends



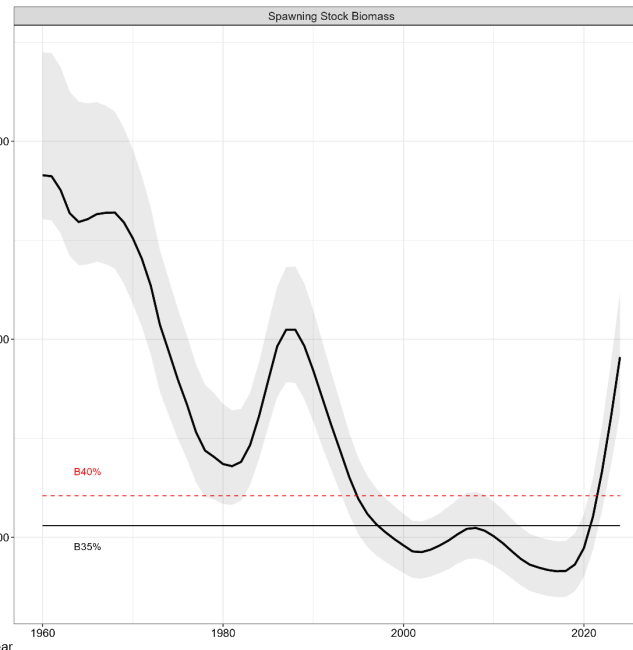
- Total biomass growth is slowing down associated with more average recruitment levels since 2020
- 2016, 2017, and 2019 year classes are 3 of the largest
- Spawning biomass (SSB) is well above target levels and increasing rapidly
 - More than 80% of SSB made up of 2014 – 2021 year classes

Biomass

Biomass and SSB with MCMC 95% Credible Intervals

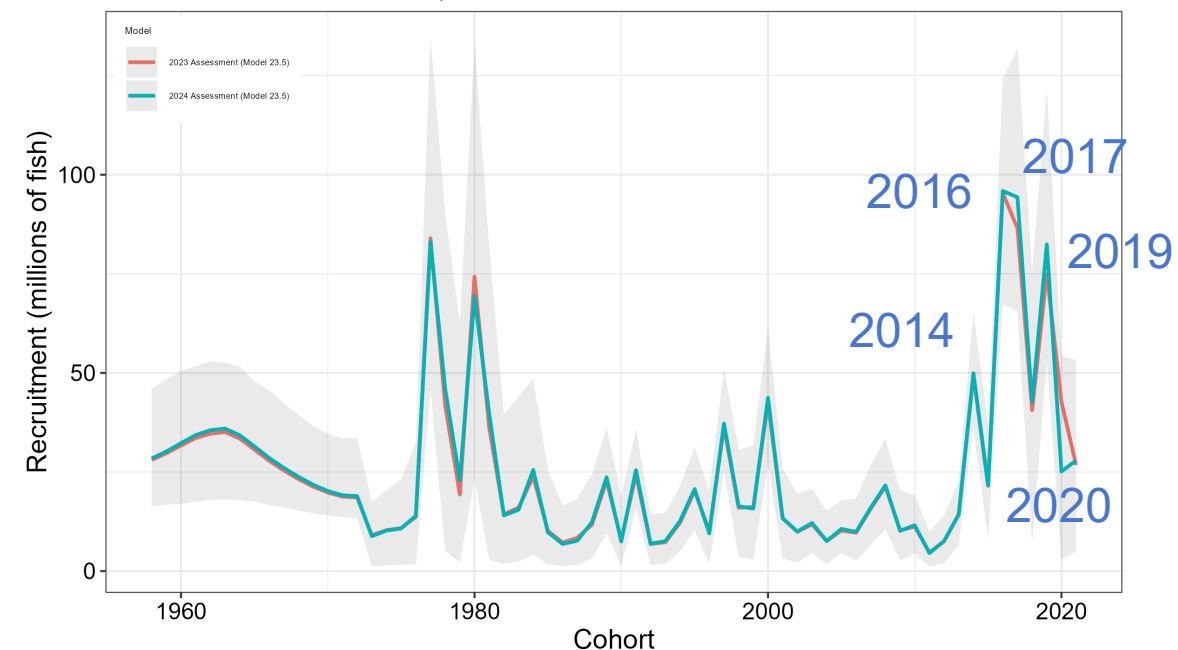


SSB



Recruitment

Model 23.5 Recruitment Compared to Previous SAFE

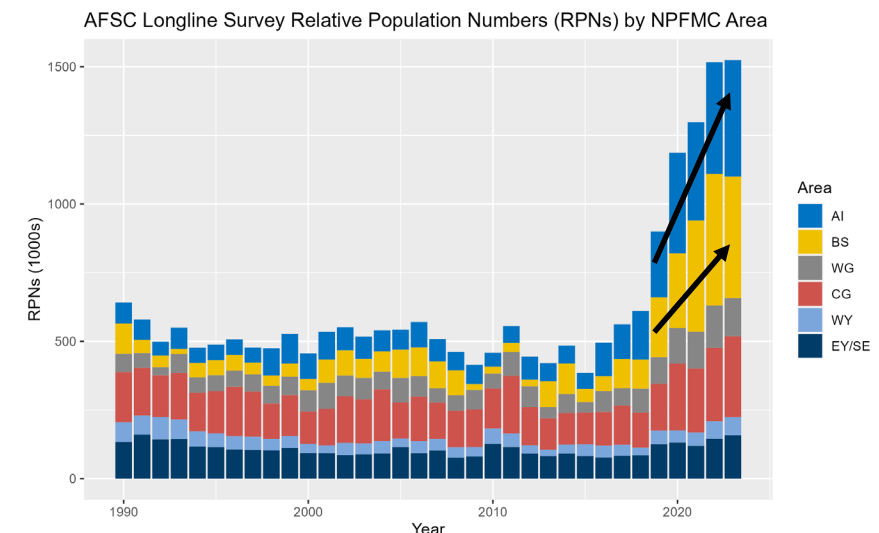


ABC and Apportionment

- **ABC = 47,605 t** (+500 t from 2024 ABC)
 - Only ~70% utilization in recent years and ~50% utilized in 2024 (as of November)
- SSC approved the current survey-based apportionment strategy in 2020
 - Uses a 5-year moving average of survey biomass (RPW) by region
 - This is NOT a static apportionment, the proportions change yearly based on updated survey biomass
 - Since ~2019, more than 50% of survey biomass has come from the BSAI

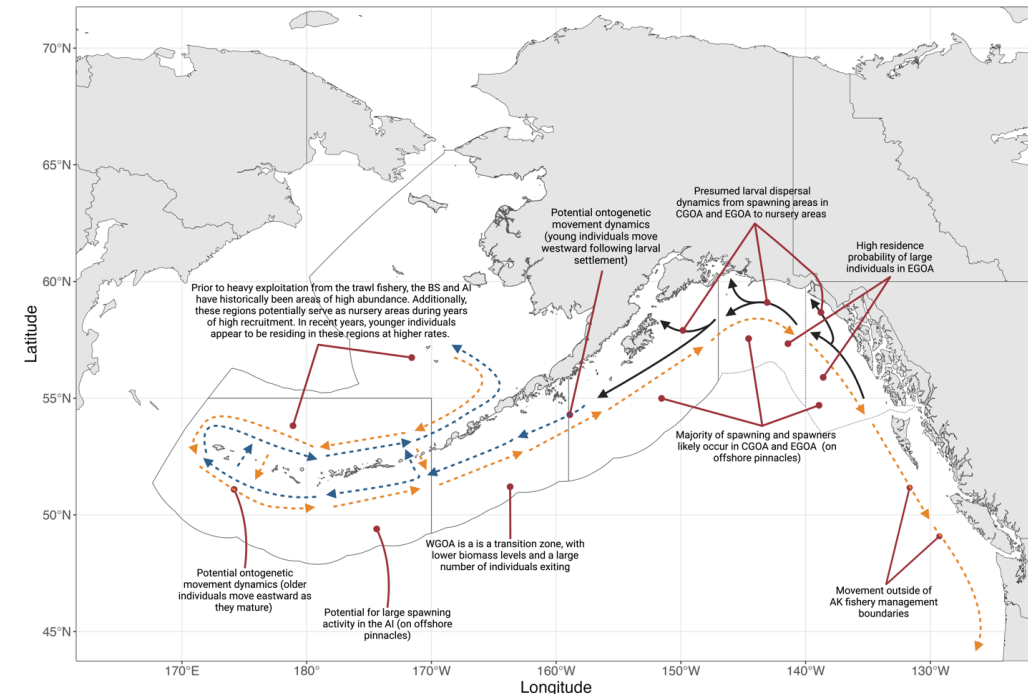
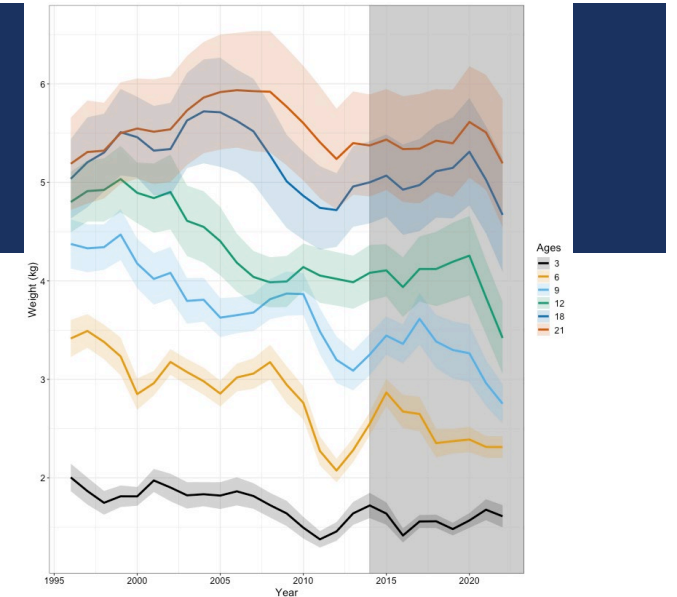
Year	2024				2025		
Region	OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch*	OFL	ABC	TAC
BS	--	11,450	7,996	4,720	--	13,203	8,496
AI	--	13,100	8,440	1,414	--	11,566	7,940
GOA	--	22,596	22,596	15,686	--	22,836	22,836
WGOA	--	4,699	4,699	2,620	--	4,756	4,756
CGOA	--	9,651	9,651	6,698	--	9,744	9,744
**WYAK	--	2,926	2,926	2,295	--	2,686	2,686
**EY/SEO	--	5,320	5,320	4,073	--	5,660	5,660
Total	55,084	47,146	39,032	21,820	58,532	47,605	39,272

*As of November 11, 2024



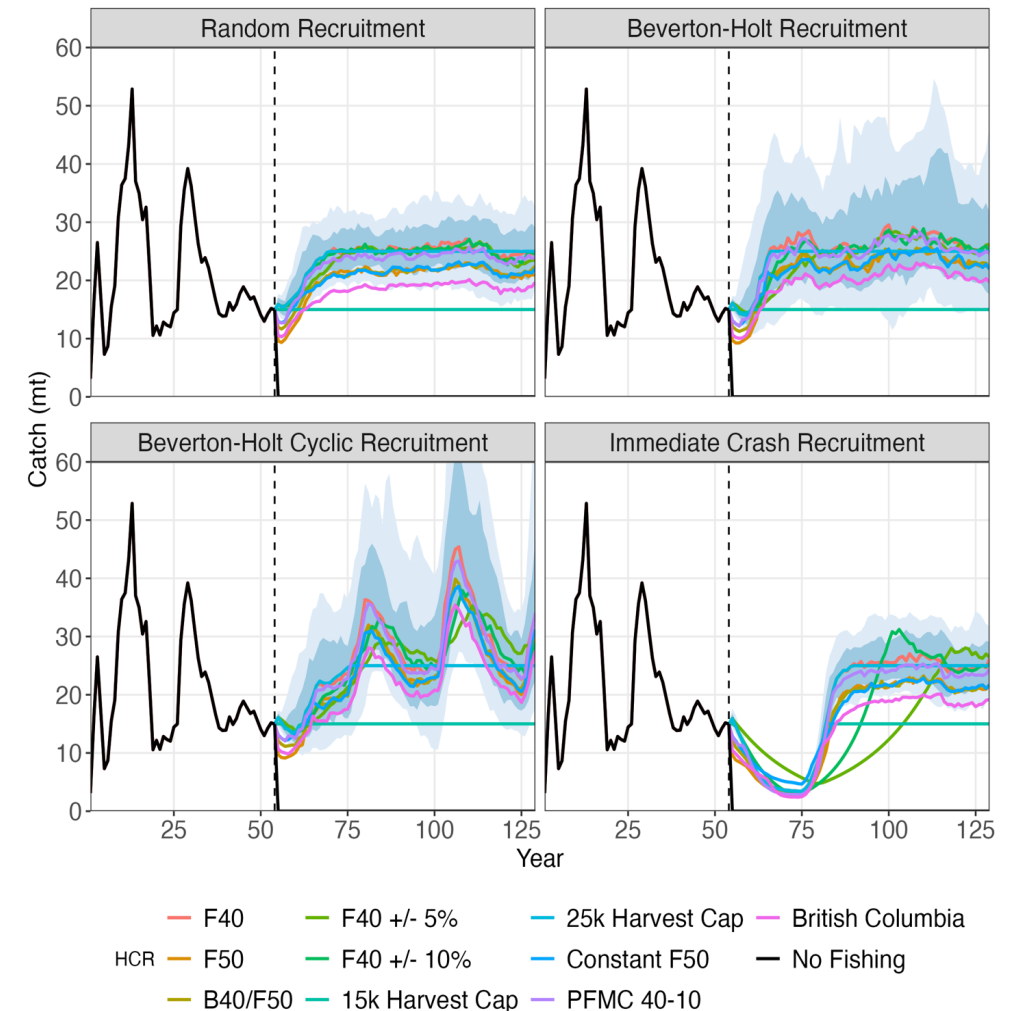
Ongoing Concerns and Research

- Rapid transition to pot gear
- Influx of small fish
 - NPFMC small sablefish release action
 - https://shinyfin.psmfc.org/small_sablefish/
- Research:
 - Spatial model (Matt Cheng, UAF)
 - Spatial assessment with age-based movement
 - Release and analysis of satellite tags to understand fine-scale movement patterns
 - Analysis of potential impacts on growth from large recruitment (Matt Cheng, UAF)
 - Understanding spatial, climate, and ecosystem drivers of sablefish recruitment (Krista Oke, APU; Samara Nehemiah, UAF)



Understanding Management Performance

- Alternate management options (including catch stability constraints) could be considered to help maintain age structure and avoid quota creep
- A sablefish management strategy evaluation (MSE) research tool has been developed to investigate whether the NPFMC F40% harvest control rule (HCR) is adequate for sablefish (Joshua Zahner, UAF)
 - Two stakeholder outreach meetings held in 2024, one in April 2025
 - More planned in 2025
 - Provide contact info if would like to be on mailing list

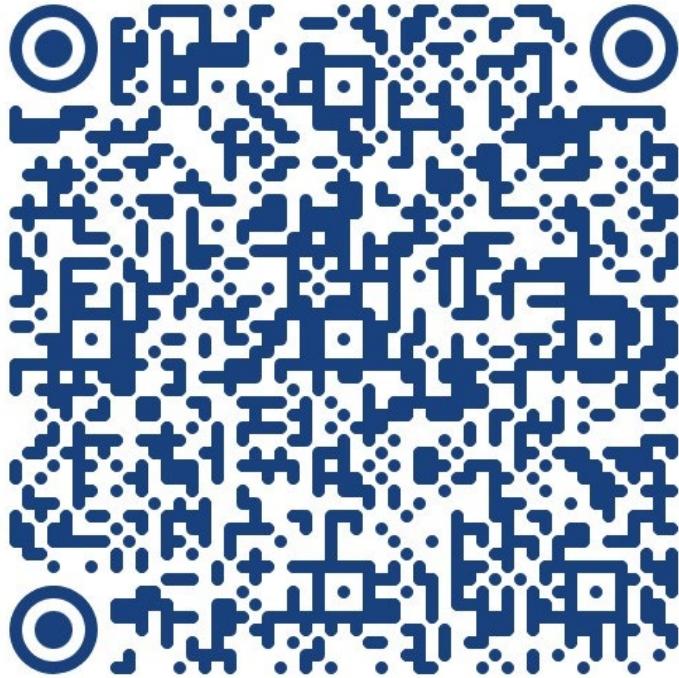


Longline Survey Update

- Historically funded by cost-recovery
- Declining margins and losses
- Survey cancelled in 2024
- Daily rate reduced by cost-recovery
- Planning to survey the GOA in 2025; BSAI in 2026
- 2-year vessel solicitation awaiting government approval

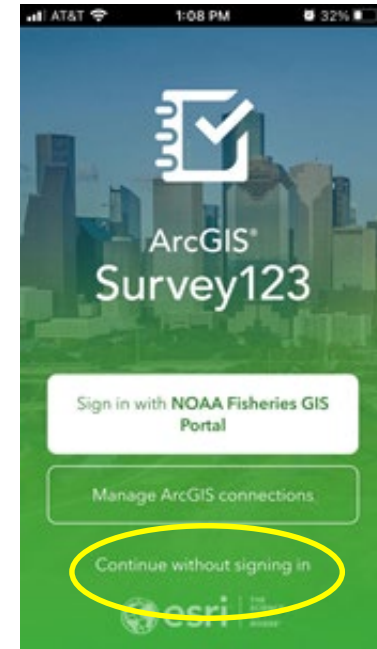


Groundfish Tag Recovery Reporting App!



Scan the QR code to download the Tag Recovery Reporting App via Survey123!

Catch a tagged fish!



Use the app to report your tag recovery at sea – no mailing necessary!



Sablefish take homes...

- Tag returns are declining
 - Turn in those tags!
 - Email katy.echave@noaa.gov
- Stay tuned for 2025 survey info
 - Schedule will be different than in the past
- Research and management
 - Join the Black Cod Almanac mailing list
 - Email katy.echave@noaa.gov
 - Participate in MSE stakeholder meetings
 - Email [daniel.goethel @noaa.gov](mailto:daniel.goethel@noaa.gov)



