

JOINT REPORT OF THE CANADIAN AND U.S. ADVISORY PANEL of
The Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and
the Government of Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting (the Agreement)

March 2, 2017

The U.S. and Canadian Advisory Panels (“AP”) convened February 28-March 2, 2017 as per the Agreement to review the advice of the SRG and JTC, review the management of the fisheries of the two parties, list their scientific experts to be candidates for the JTC and SRG, and make their recommendations to the JMC on these items.

The U.S. AP members in attendance were Joe Bersch (Chair), Mike Okoniewski, Mike Hyde, Bob Dooley, Dave Smith, Brent Paine, Tom Libby and Al Carter.

The Canadian AP members in attendance were Dave Dawson (Chair), Shannon Mann, Albert Radil, Brian Mose, and Joe Greene.

Members of the public also attended the meeting and were provided the opportunity for public comment.

The AP attended the presentations from the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) and Scientific Review Group (SRG) on the 2016 fishery and on the 2017 stock assessment. The AP wishes to thank the JTC and SRG for their robust scientific review of the status of the whiting stock, and especially Ian Taylor (JTC) who provided technical input and answered questions throughout the AP discussions. Again, the AP thanks the Joint Management Committee (JMC) for providing open and direct access to the JTC in order to assist in the decision-making process of the AP.

The AP considered the 2017 stock assessment and the advice of the JTC and the SRG and recommends the following for consideration by the JMC:

1. TAC ADVICE

- The AP recommends a 2017 adjusted (including carry over) total allowable catch (TAC) level of 597,500 mt.
- The AP considers the 2017 Pacific Hake Assessment provided by the JTC and reviewed by the SRG to be the best available science. The AP’s recommended TAC is well-supported by the decision tables in the assessment document. The TAC recommended by the AP results in a projected fishing intensity well below the default harvest level. As per Tables 28-30 of the assessment document.
- Although the default harvest control rule produces a 2017 harvest option of 969,840 mt, the AP recommends a more conservative approach to reduce fishing-related impacts.
- The AP has reviewed past harvest and performance of individual sectors in the US and Canadian industry and considered all relevant factors influencing potential harvest

outcomes for 2017. Based on this review, the AP estimates total coastwide harvest in 2017 will be under 400,000 mt. This estimated harvest level is consistent with the long-term maximum sustainable harvest resulting from the management strategy evaluation (MSE) developed to-date.

- At the estimated harvest levels, the 2010 and 2014 cohorts are expected to continue to contribute economically and biologically over multiple years providing benefits to the nations of Canada and the U.S.
- The AP will continue to evaluate annually the latest surveys, stock assessments, and best available science. The continued conservative management recommendations of the AP are intended to ensure that each country will have the opportunity to receive, over the long term, the intended benefits contemplated in the Treaty.

AP Recommended TAC (no adjustment)	531,501
Unadjusted Canada TAC @26.12%	138,828
Unadjusted US TAC @ 73.88%	392,673
Canada 2016 Carryover @15% of previous Year TAC	17,239
US 2016 Carryover @15% of previous Year TAC	48,760
Canada Adjusted TAC	156,067
US Adjusted TAC	441,433
Coastwide Adjusted TAC Total	597,500

2. MSE ADVICE

- Although the AP agrees that the 2017 assessment is the best available science, it is the opinion of the AP that it does not adequately inform industry/managers on issues relevant to the long-term management of the Pacific whiting stock.
- Consistent with the recommendations of the JTC and SRG, the AP supports the efforts of the JMC to expedite progress towards developing a MSE framework that includes a spatially-explicit model that may be used to assist in assessing management procedures and decisions related to management of Pacific whiting.
- The AP encourages the Parties to secure funding and staff resources as quickly as possible to support this effort. The AP requests periodic updates from the JMC on progress towards this goal and anticipates the Parties will secure the necessary funding and staff resources by late April, prior to the May 2017 JMC Meeting. In the event the Parties are unable to secure adequate funding in this time frame, the AP will convene to

discuss funding alternatives so that progress towards meeting the MSE workplan as outlined in the SRG report can be achieved as quickly as possible.

3. SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- The AP recommends the Parties take all steps necessary to minimize the impacts of the limited resources and loss of the Canadian survey vessel to complete the 2017 acoustic survey.
- The AP requests to be involved in further planning for the 2017 acoustic survey. The AP emphasizes the importance of input/involvement from industry representatives in this process and has appointed Dave Smith and Brian Mose to advise the survey team for this purpose.
- The AP stresses the importance of completing a robust 2017 acoustic survey to reduce uncertainty related to the stock biomass estimate and to inform the 2018 management process.
- In the event there is a limitation of resources in 2017, the AP requests that the survey design team include the input of the two AP representatives in considering the best approach to minimize adverse impacts of survey design changes.

4. SRG/JTC APPOINTMENTS

- The AP recommends the following individuals for appointment as independent members of the JTC and SRG. For the JTC: **Sean Cox**, Andre Punt, and Mark Maunder. For the SRG: **Trevor Branch**, **Allan Hicks**, Dave Sampson, Tom Jagiello, John Horn, and Sandy McFarlane.