



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Stock Assessment Building Blocks

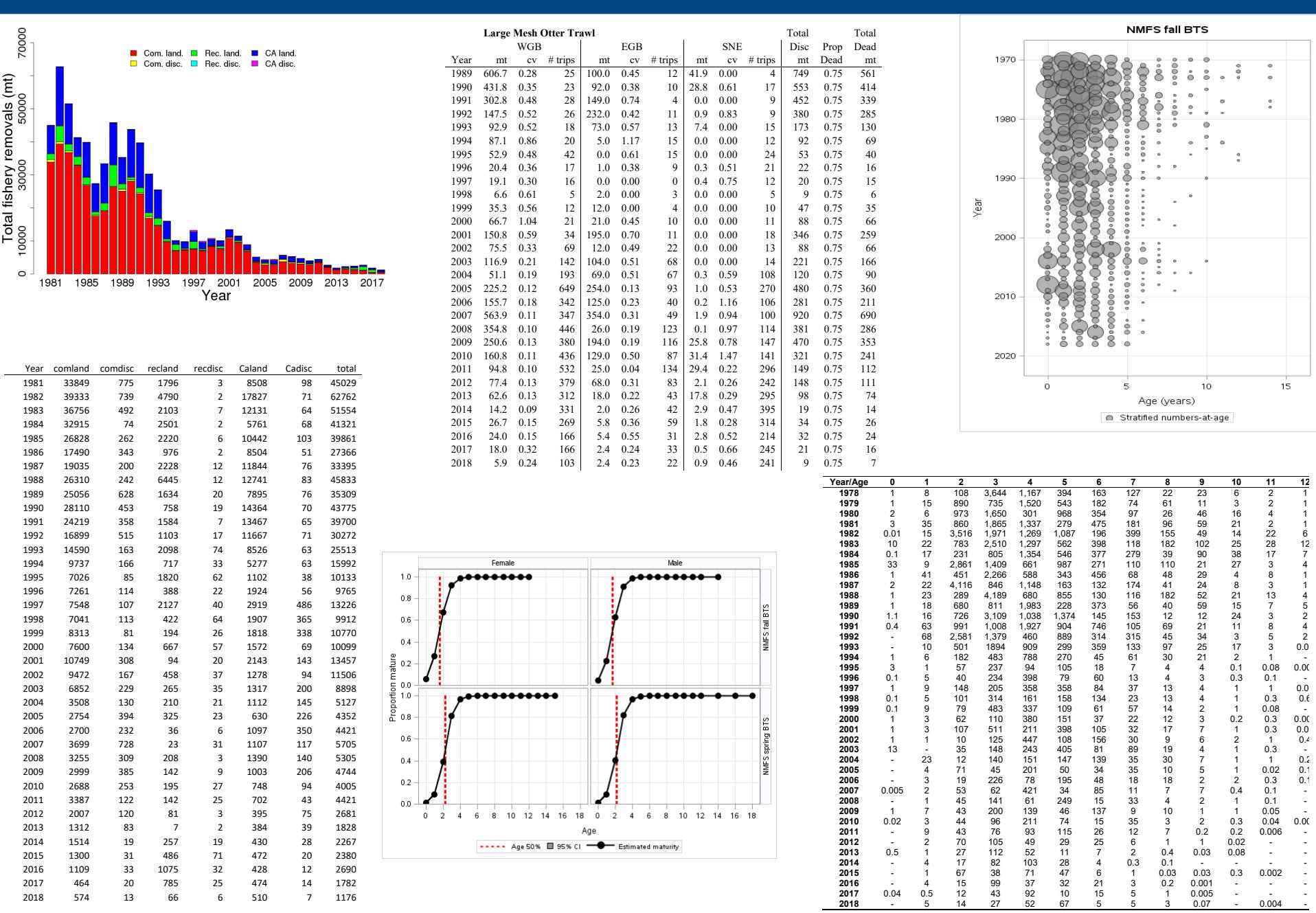
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1 June 2021

Presentation to Cod Stock Structure Workshop

Building Blocks Take Home

- Representative
- Stratified
- Challenges



Catch

- How many fish were removed from the population by fishing?
- Commercial
 - Landings
 - Discards
- Recreational
 - Landings
 - Released but died
- Other countries

A Commercial Trip

- Pre-Trip Notification System or similar
 - Observer or not – estimate discards
- Go fish
 - Record catch in Vessel Trip Report – where fishing
 - Electronic monitoring perhaps – confirm discards
- Land fish
 - Sell to dealer(s) (Dealer reports)
 - Port samplers may collect length/age samples
- Challenges
 - Matching all the data from this trip (and all the other trips)
 - Estimating discards when not observed
 - Fishing in multiple areas on one trip

Recreational Data

- Marine Recreational Information Program
- Mail and telephone surveys for effort
- Intercept survey at docks for catch/effort
- Effort * catch/effort = catch
- Challenges
 - Lots of recreational fishing and landing points
 - Based on where landed not where fished
 - Fate of released fish (and how many released)

Tons to Numbers at Age

- Length samples convert catch in weight to catch in numbers at length
 - Three 50 cm fish in 40 kg sample -> 3,000 50 cm fish in 40 metric ton catch
- Age samples tell proportion at age for each length
 - Three fish age 5 and two fish age 6 at 50 cm means 3,000 50 cm fish split into 1,800 age 5 and 1,200 age 6
- Why age?
 - Accounts for growth of fish during year and different cohort sizes

Tons to Numbers at Age II

- Representative
 - Time – growth
 - Gear – selectivity
- Stratification
 - Market categories (landings)
 - Gear groups (discards)
 - Quarter or half year
- Challenges
 - Grouping data
 - Filling holes

Surveys

- Consistent gear and effort
- Track changes in population
 - Often relative abundance
 - Survey catchability allows absolute abundance
- Also provide biological information
 - Maturity and diet data
 - Length, weight, age samples
- Challenges
 - Sample size
 - Spatial coverage (availability)

What about CPUE?

- Catch per unit effort from fishing fleet
 - Sometimes landings per unit effort (LPUE)
- Can also be used to measure change in fish population
- Challenges
 - Change in CPUE may be due to factors other than change in population
 - CPUE may not change when population does
 - Tradeoff between consistent and representative trips

Other Building Blocks

- Directed studies for biology or fishery
 - Maturity/fecundity
 - Growth (length at age and weight at length)
 - Selectivity
 - Natural mortality (really difficult)
 - Release (discard) mortality rate
 - Movement
- Cooperative research between fishermen and scientists key to getting these studies right
- Challenges
 - Changing environment
 - Time and money to conduct studies

What does this mean for cod?

- Changing stock definitions requires recreating full time series of catch, survey, biological, and fishery information
 - Not an automated process
 - Requires human oversight and decision making
 - Data collected under one set of stock definitions may not be appropriate or sufficient for another set of stock definitions
 - More stocks means less data per stock
 - Low catch and population size means less data collected regardless of stock definitions
- Important to get stock definitions right because using wrong stock definitions can lead to poor management (simulation studies)

Building Blocks Take Home

- Representative
- Stratified
- Challenges

Questions?