

March 1, 2021 (4:05 PM)

Original: English

**BRIEF UPDATE ON NORTH ATLANTIC ALBACORE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Exceptional circumstances are triggered when reality diverges from what was simulated in the analyses conducted to adopt the HCR. In 2020, taking into account the Panel 2 discussions and input provided by CPCs to the March 2020 Panel 2 meeting, the SCRS updated the list of indicators to detect such Exceptional Circumstances.

These were organized around two main principles:

1. When there is evidence that the stock is in a state not previously considered to be plausible in the context of the MSE and/or;
2. When there is evidence that the data required to apply the HCR are not available or are no longer appropriate.

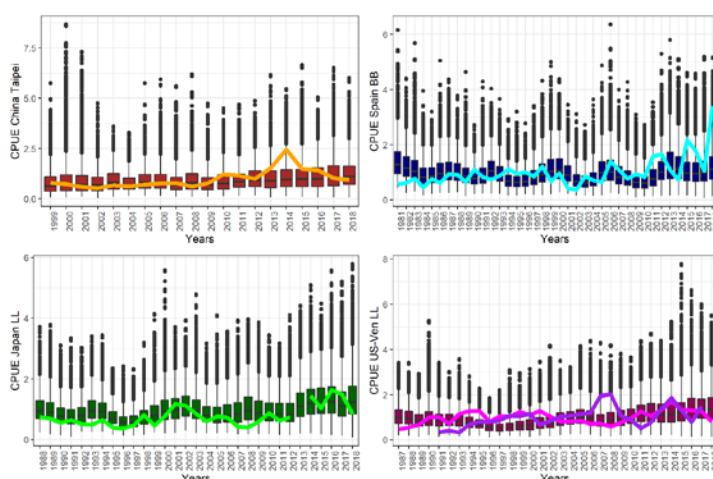
These principles are general in nature and can be modified.

The suggested indicators require different data (catch, CPUE, biological data) and stock status indicators ( $F/F_{MSY}$  and  $B/B_{MSY}$ ) for both the simulated realities of the stock and the simulated stock assessments. The exercise of determining whether exceptional circumstances occur involved checking that the new data and stock status indicators are available and within the range of values used in the simulations.

Each indicator is evaluated with a different periodicity. In a regular year (between HCR iterations), updated catch and CPUE values can be evaluated. When the HCR is iterated (every 3 years), the  $B/B_{MSY}$  and  $F/F_{MSY}$  trajectories estimated by the production mode can be compared to the homologous estimates in the simulations. And when a full/benchmark assessment is conducted (every 6-7 years), the estimated  $B/B_{MSY}$  and  $F/F_{MSY}$  trajectories can be compared to the simulated realities for the stock.

As an example, below are the main plots used in 2020 (a year when the HCR was iterated) to determine that there was no indication of exceptional circumstances, as the new trajectories (lines) lied within simulated bounds (boxplots). Similar plots would be used for different indicators in different years.

- CPUE was within simulated bounds:



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- Estimated  $B/B_{MSY}$  and  $F/F_{MSY}$  were within simulated bounds:

