

Black Sea Bass Research Track Assessment
Terms of Reference
May 29 2014 Draft

1. Explore cohort tracking to verify utility of fishery independent surveys in tracking abundance and/or year class strength.
2. Examine the spatial timing and coherence of fishery-independent surveys relative to black sea bass distribution and migration.
3. Explore options for developing new age-length keys.
4. Develop new assessment model(s) that address:
 - a. ageing uncertainty
 - b. the spatial structure and migratory behavior of black sea bass
 - c. the unique life history features of black sea bass (e.g., protogynous life history, sex-specificity, etc.)
 - d. the incorporation of all available length and age data
 - e. the incorporation of time-varying catchability to account for possible density dependent catchability in fishery independent surveys.
5. Develop new biological reference points that take into account the complexities of black sea bass life history.
6. Examine impact of systematic oceanographic changes on abundance and distribution