



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 31, 2020
To: Council
From: J. Didden, staff
Subject: *Illex* Working Group Update

Staff and Dr. Paul Rago will update the Council on efforts by the *Illex* Working Group to investigate if current information suggests that adjustments to the *Illex* quota may be appropriate, and if there are ways to make the *Illex* quota more responsive to real-time conditions.

There are eight short-term tasks the *Illex* Working Group is pursuing, and the status of each will be reviewed. Staff will also describe the proposed longer-term tasks.

Additional information is available at <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/illex-working-group>.

Short Term Tasks (for May 2020 SSC meeting review)

1. Summarize world-wide squid assessment and management approaches.
2. List and describe key existing available data sources.
3. Summarize our knowledge about *Illex* growth including length/weight data from industry.
4. Begin biological information project (maturity and aging) using 2019 industry-provided samples.
5. Develop/refine meaningful catch per unit of effort (CPUE) measures.
6. Conduct a preliminary evaluation of CPUE relative to potential stock depletion.
7. Summarize the NAFO assessment and NAFO quota situation.
8. Conduct analyses that describe the proportion of *Illex* habitat fished in any given year and consider related implications for potential overfishing (or lack thereof).