Chasing the moving target of sustainability: understanding tradeoffs between fisheries and conservation goals in a changing ocean

Jameal Samhouri, Briana Abrahms, Blake Feist, Mary Fisher, Karin Forney, Elliott Hazen, Dan Lawson, Owen Liu, Jessica Redfern, Lauren Saez, Sam Woodman





We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom.

- E. O. Wilson



Integrated Ecosystem Assessment: a framework for organizing science in order to inform decisions in marine management



Levin et al. 2009, *PLoS Biology*





IEA to tackle entanglements



IEA to tackle entanglements



IEA to tackle entanglements



Retrospective analysis of whale risk and California Dungeness crab fishery revenue 2009-19



Quantifying whale risk and fishery revenue



Co-occurrence of whales and fishing



Fish-ticket informed VMS data





Whale risk high from 2014-2018

Whales more common on Dungeness crab fishing grounds during 2014-18 than before or after



Fishery performance mixed 2014-18



Tradeoff analysis to identify approaches for reducing risk to whales with least cost to the CA Dungeness crab fishery



"His is a thought experiment."



What might have been?

- 1. Delayed openings
- 2. Early closures
- 3. Spring gear reductions
- 4. Spring depth restrictions



Crab Fishery Revenue

1. Expected risk reductions greatest and more variable in 2014-18



2. Spring gear and depth restrictions remarkably effective





3. Statewide management actions reduce risk more than those affecting central California only



CenCA Statewide CenCA Statewide

CenCA Statewide CenCA Statewide

What about the fishery?

- Costs greatest and most variable in 2014-18
- Gear and depth restrictions less costly
- Statewide management actions cost the fishery more than those affecting central California only



Similar costs for small vessels

- Costs greatest and most variable in 2014-18
- Gear and depth restrictions less costly
- Statewide management actions cost the fishery more than those affecting central California only



Tradeoff to the fleet is most stark in 2014-18



Take-homes

- Management strategies have different benefits to whales and costs to the fishery under alt. ocean conditions
- Depth and gear restrictions in spring alone provide substantial risk reduction at lower cost

Future work

- Hindsight is 20/20 \rightarrow forecasting tools
- Consider add'l complexities: fleet heterogeneity, HABs, reactive measures

