Review of performance of the Cape Town procedure

Introduction

The meta-rules for the Cape Town Procedure (CTP) states that:

> *"Every six years (not coinciding with years when a new TAC is calculated from the MP) the ESC will:*
>
> - *Review the performance of the MP; and*
> - *On the basis of the review determine whether the MP is on track to meet the rebuilding objective or a new MP is required."*

Draft terms of reference for the above review are at attachment A for consideration.

Timing

It is anticipated that the 2026 ESC will agree terms of reference and provide them to the 2026 Commission meeting for agreement. The ESC would complete the review at the 2027 ESC and provide its advice to the 2027 Commission meeting.

Things to be considered outside the review of performance of the CTP

Stock objective

The current CTP objective is to reach 30% of TRO_0 by 2035. The most recent stock assessment indicates the stock was at 23% TRO_0 in 2023 and has been growing at roughly 1 percentage point per year. If the stock continues to grow at this rate, it may not be long before it reaches the 30% target. The Commission will need to decide if a new objective is required. If it is, then a new management procedure will also be required which will take time to develop, test and agree. Whether a new objective is required should be considered outside the review of the CTP considered in this paper.

Science funding

Over the last couple of years the CCBST budget has been under short-term pressure. There have been some calls to reduce funding for certain aspects of the data collection and science required to operate the CTP. The 2025 ESC noted that because of the substantial changes to the software and models for the SBT stock assessment, and related OMs, that evaluation of impacts of changes to the science program on the CTP should be considered in 2027. Similar to the stock objective issue discussed above funding for data and science should be considered outside the review of the CTP considered in this paper.

Attachment A- Draft Terms of Reference for Review of the Cape Town Management Procedure

Draft terms of reference (TOR) for the review of the CCSBT Management Procedure (MP) are included here as a starting point for ideas and discussion. Given the objectives and inputs to the MP, reasonable TORs for the MP review might include:

1. Review of data, including:
    - Input data series to the MP. This should include a review of data collection, reliability, costs and analysis methods, and potential alternative data sources.
    - Review of the data predicted by the OM versus those observed in the monitoring series.
    - Review of alternative indices and new information on population and fishery dynamics.
2. Review of observed MP performance for stock rebuilding, including for example:
    - Estimated SSB in year of review and 5yr trend from the OM.
    - Estimated average recruitment and 5yr trend from the OM.
    - Estimated year to achieve the rebuilding target.
    - Updated Close-kin estimate of abundance and CPUE, as well as the 5 year trend in spawning potential and projected trend.
    - Review of robustness tests applied.
3. Review of population dynamics and other key assumptions used in testing and tuning in the year of adoption (2019).
    - Natural mortality (M), steepness (h) and unfished biomass (B0) interaction.
    - Re-estimation of R0.
    - Form and values of natural mortality schedule.
    - Form of CPUE standardisation.
    - Need and frequency of UAM estimates.
    - Initial consideration of Performance measures and MP for beyond rebuilding target.
        - Consider / discuss adopting an ultimate target greater than 30% TRO beyond the current rebuilding period
    - Given the outcome of the above, is re-tuning of the CTP or development of new candidate MPs warranted.
4. Timetable, priority and funding arrangements for future ESC MP work program.
    - Balancing research cost/survey frequency and frequency of application of the MP.
    - Considerations for development of a new MP.

Source: https://www.ccsbt.org/system/files/2023-08/ESC28_17_AU_Planning_for_SBT_MP_review.pdf

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