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](http://www.mafmc.org/actions/illex-working-group).

**Short Term Tasks (for May 2020 SSC meeting review)**

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).