2016 Benchmark Stock Assessment TORs

TOR 1:
Evaluate the feasibility of assessment models for the blue crab fishery that operate on sub annual time steps and/or at spatial resolutions lower than that of the entire Chesapeake Bay.

TOR 2:
Evaluate and recommend biological reference points for the Male and Female Chesapeake Bay blue crab populations.

TOR 3:
Provide an evaluation of the status of the stock relative to recommended reference points.

TOR 4:
Characterize uncertainty in assessment estimates.

TOR 5:
Critically review and estimate life history parameters and vital rates of blue crab in the Chesapeake Bay that are relevant to an assessment of the stock. In particular, the assessment should evaluate the extent and scale of inter-annual variation in life history parameters and vital rates of blue crab in Chesapeake Bay.

TOR 6:
Describe and quantify patterns in fishery-independent surveys. Analyses should include
- an evaluation of the most effective partitioning of survey data in space and time and in relation to biological characteristics of crabs caught,
- evaluation of the efficacy of fishery-independent surveys not included in previous stock assessments, and
- an evaluation of the impacts of environmental and abiotic factors on survey catches, to maximize the information content of resultant survey time series

TOR 7:
Describe and quantify patterns in catch and effort by sector and region, including analyses that examine the impacts of reporting changes and trends in CPUE.

TOR 8:
Evaluate the utility of incorporating a commercial CPUE index in the assessment.

TOR 9:
Update with relevant new data assessment models used previously in assessing the Chesapeake blue crab stock.

TOR 10:
Evaluate the potential for ecosystem-based considerations to explain past fishery performance.