

Response Statement - Darkblotched Rockfish

December 2, 2010

Common Name: Darkblotched Rockfish

Scientific Name: *Sebastes crameri*

Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC): Special Concern

How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment: The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will undertake consultations with the government of British Columbia, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the Darkblotched Rockfish should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Special Concern. The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the Darkblotched Rockfish to the Governor in Council upon completion of consultations.

Once a species has been assessed by COSEWIC, further steps must be undertaken before it is added to Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. For more information on this process, please view [The Species Listing Process Under SARA](#).

Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC: This long-lived species (maximum age 100 years; generation length 23 years) demonstrates episodic recruitment events. The species is taken at relatively low levels in fisheries targeting more abundant rockfishes. Research surveys show no clear abundance trends, although information on abundance trends has relatively high uncertainty. In adjacent US waters, the species declined 84% from 1928-1999 and is considered overfished, although there has been some recent population recovery. Recent surveys do not account for population declines from foreign fishing prior to the 1970s.

Occurrence: Pacific Ocean

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:

British Columbia

Applicable federal legislation: Fisheries are managed and fish habitat is protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

Conservation activities underway: Darkblotched Rockfish is managed collectively with other non-Total Allowable Catch (TAC) rockfish species. Management of these species include catch limits, and other measures to control commercial fishing gear and seasons. In 2002, Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) were established through the development of DFO's Rockfish Conservation Strategies. Darkblotched Rockfish likely receive partial protection from fishing restrictions in RCAs. Complete 100 percent monitoring on all commercial groundfish fishing trips has also been put in place to record fishing activity, monitor at-sea releases, location, date and time. Effective monitoring and accurate catch reporting are integral to resource management, enforcement of fisheries rules and the development of effective management plans. Monitoring of all catch, both landed and at sea releases is critical to sustainable fisheries management. At-sea monitoring encourages responsible fishing and provides information supportive of Canada's international obligations for fisheries.