



Bocaccio

Submit Your Comments Here

Information summary and [survey](#) for the consultations on adding Bocaccio to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as Endangered – **Please provide your input by December 8, 2017**

Consultations

Let your opinion be heard

Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) provides legal protection for wildlife species at risk to conserve biological diversity. It also acknowledges that all Canadians have a role to play in the conservation of wildlife species.

Before deciding whether Bocaccio (*Sebastes paucispinis*) will be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as Endangered, the Government of Canada would like to hear your opinion, comments, and suggestions regarding the possible ecological, cultural, and economic impacts of listing or not listing this species under SARA.

Adding a species to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk

The process of listing a species under SARA consists of several steps: it begins with a status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and ends with a Government of Canada decision on whether or not to add a species to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk. Public consultations are conducted to gather the opinions of Canadians and are an important step in this process.



Facts about Bocaccio

Bocaccio is one of at least 35 species of rockfish (*Sebastes* spp.) found in British Columbia. It is one of the largest rockfish species and can reach almost one metre in length and up to nine kilograms in weight. These fish can be distinguished from other rockfish by their long lower jaw.

Bocaccio is also referred to as Rock Salmon, Salmon Rockfish, Pacific Red Snapper, Pacific Snapper, Oregon Red Snapper, Oregon Snapper, and Longjaw.

Bocaccio are found in the northeastern Pacific Ocean, occurring from the Gulf of Alaska to central Baja California in Mexico. In Canada, Bocaccio are found mainly offshore although they have occasionally been found closer to inshore waters such as the Strait of Georgia, Juan de Fuca Strait, and Queen Charlotte Strait. The current population is estimated to be over 400,000 individuals.

Bocaccio have a long lifespan, with a maximum age of at least 57 years. The average generation time is 20 years. Bocaccio are born during the winter. They live in the upper layers of the ocean for the first year and juveniles settle to ocean bottom habitats in nearshore areas where they form schools. As they mature into adults (around 7 years) Bocaccio move offshore to greater depths, typically being found above rocky bottoms at depths between 60 and 340 metres.

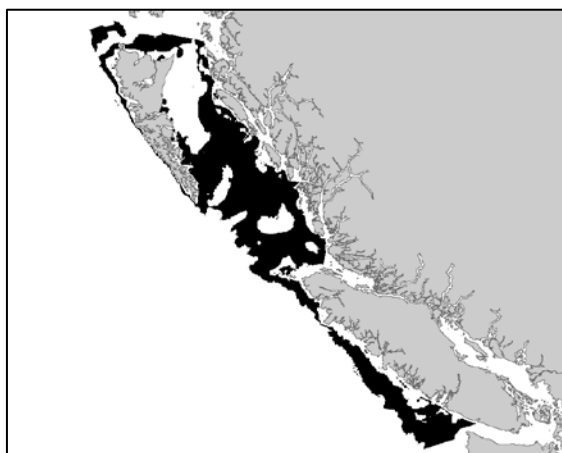


Figure 2: Maximum potential habitat area for adult Bocaccio. Note that the shaded area excludes enclosed waters and inlets, some of which have proven to be habitat for adult and young Bocaccio (source: COSEWIC 2002).



Aquatic Species at Risk

Who assigned the Endangered status to Bocaccio?

COSEWIC is an independent committee of experts that assesses which wildlife species are in some danger of disappearing from Canada and assigns a status to these species. It conducts its assessments based on the best available information including scientific data, local ecological knowledge, and Aboriginal traditional knowledge. COSEWIC initially assessed this species as Threatened in 2002. In November 2013, Bocaccio was reassessed by COSEWIC as Endangered. Under SARA, an endangered species is defined as one that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

Why is Bocaccio at risk?

COSEWIC assessed Bocaccio as 'Endangered' because Bocaccio has been in continuous decline for 60 years and it has declined by 28% in the 10-year period since it was first assessed by COSEWIC. New surveys initiated since the last assessment indicate that these recent declines have occurred in areas of highest biomass off the west coast of Vancouver Island and in Queen Charlotte Sound.

Fishery bycatch has been reduced but remains the main threat to the population. Commercial groundfish fisheries are the largest known threat to Bocaccio. Like other rockfish species, Bocaccio have swim bladders which cannot adjust to the sudden changes in pressure that occur when fishing gear brings them to the surface. Bocaccio incidentally caught in fisheries die when they are brought up from depths greater than about 25 to 30 metres. Potential threats to habitat include observed declines in dissolved oxygen in British Columbia waters as well as damage to coral and sponge reefs by fishing gear.

Bocaccio are more susceptible to overfishing because of the species' life history characteristics, such as late maturity and variable recruitment. As with most other rockfish, Bocaccio offspring survival is variable from year to year, as it is dependent on the density of adults and ideal environmental conditions. Life history characteristics such as these reduce the species' ability to recover from population decline.

If a species is listed under the *Species at Risk Act*

If Bocaccio is listed as Endangered, the prohibitions of SARA would immediately come into effect in Canadian

waters. It would be illegal to kill, harm, harass, capture, take, possess, collect, buy, sell, or trade Bocaccio. However, activities that may affect the species or its critical habitat may be permitted under SARA section 73-74, or exempt under section 83, where that activity does not jeopardize the survival or recovery of the species. A recovery strategy and subsequent action plan(s) would be developed to identify measures to address known threats. Critical habitat – the habitat necessary for the survival and recovery of Bocaccio – would need to be identified, to the extent possible, in a recovery strategy or action plan and protected from destruction.

We would like to receive your comments on the potential impacts of adding or not adding Bocaccio to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under SARA designated as Endangered.

Your comments are important.

Please fill out the [survey](#): we want to hear from you.

Before completing this survey, you may wish to review the following background information found at the links below:

- [2013 COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report on Bocaccio](#);
- [Recovery Potential Assessment](#) (DFO's peer-reviewed scientific advice);
- [Management Scenarios](#); and
- an analysis of the [socio-economic benefits and costs of the Management Scenarios](#)
- other information can be found on the Species at Risk Public Registry at www.sararegistry.gc.ca.

Thank you for completing this [survey](#).

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