



COSEWIC Assessment Summary

Assessment Summary – April 2007

Common name

Longspine thornyhead

Scientific name

Sebastolobus altivelis

Status

Special Concern

Reason for designation

This slow growing rockfish has adapted to survive in deep waters where oxygen concentrations are minimal and productivity is low. Since the beginning of the fishery in the mid-1990s there has been an estimated decline in commercial catch per unit effort of over 50% in 8 years. Fishing is the primary and probably sole cause of this decline. While the fishery is managed by catch limits, and there is good monitoring of fishing activities, there is no management strategy in place that assures catches will be adjusted in response to abundance changes. The substantial decline in abundance indices over a short period taken together with the very conservative life history characteristics are cause for concern, but commercial catch per unit effort may not reflect abundance changes accurately and there is potential for rescue from adjoining populations in the USA.

Occurrence

Pacific Ocean

Status history

Designated Special Concern in April 2007. Assessment based on a new status report.