A Virtual Research Environment that provides tools to easily explore, parameterize, and run the SS3 model

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SUMMARY

Stock assessment software are complex and advanced technical skills are required to develop the models. Producing output becomes time-intensive and even more complex as thousands of simulations must be run on supercomputers in order to include the multiple sources of uncertainty in assessment results. As few stock assessment participants have the specific technical skills required to reproduce these outputs, our aim has been to develop a Virtual Research Environment (VRE) that enables any user to easily parameterize, execute and edit online various steps of the stock assessment work flow using SS3 (a widely-used statistical catch-at-age model), with standardized data outputs. A collaborative environment such as the VRE uses simple tools to enable the storage and access of the data and source codes necessary to replicate past results or to try new parameterizations of the model. The VRE will provide various collaborative web services, including: (i) a workspace to share documents or data, (ii) webpages or an RStudio server to process data online, and (iii) an automated reporting service to dynamically generate documents to package the results. Here, we illustrate the stock assessment work flow through the VRE, using the last stock assessment of yellowfin, provided by the IOTC, as an example. Currently, we are also able to replicate past stock assessments of swordfish and bigeye tuna, and theoretically, any species model using SS3 can

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be similarly replicated. Increasing access to this complex model will bring more transparency and collaboration within working groups by providing "non-modelers" with a possibility to test hypotheses for the stock assessment. This will also increase the number of users of various levels of expertise: from experts, to managers, to even wider audiences with the potential applications of these tools to serious games.

<u>KEYWORDS</u>: Indian Ocean, large pelagic fish, yellowfin tuna, *Thunnus albacares*, scientific cloud, stock assessment, grid computing, online processing

1. Introduction

Several different types of stock assessment models are used to provide scientific advice to managers about exploited populations. Stock Synthesis 3 (SS3) is a statistical catch-at-age model that is used widely [Methot and Wetzel, 2013], including assessments for several stocks under the management of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). SS3 is flexible in terms of data inputs and complexity, making it possible to run with data-poor stocks. It can use a diverse array of fishery and survey data, including both age and size structure of the population.

SS3 is based on ADMB C++ software that maximizes the goodness-of-fit of a set of parameter values, and then calculates the variance of these parameters using inverse Hessian and MCMC methods. This software is complex and advanced technical skills are required to develop the models. As such, the developers of SS3 have provided a Graphical User Interface (GUI) to aid in the set up and parametrization of complex assessment models [Methot, 2017]. However, the production of outputs can still be time-intensive and complex when thousands of simulations are needed to include the multiple sources of uncertainty in the assessment results. Interactions with the results also tend to necessitate skilled language programming.

As few stock assessment participants have the specific technical skills required to reproduce these outputs, our aim is execute the entire IOTC SS3 stock assessment work flow online, using a Virtual Research Environment (VRE; [Candela et al., 2013] on the H2020 BlueBridge infrastructure ([Coro et al., 2017]; European Union grant agreement No 675680). In collaboration with the IOTC and the FAO, IRD and IFREMER would like to develop this VRE to facilitate the parametrization, parallelization, and execution of various steps of the stock assessment and the visualization of the results of SS3 to users with varying levels of expertise. We follow a similar approach as [Imzilen et al., 2017], who developed a VRE based on Virtual Population Analysis of Atlantic bluefin tuna (Thunnus thynnus) used in the stock assessment work flow of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. The SS3 VRE will provide various collaborative web services, including: (i) a workspace to share documents, codes or data, (ii) webpages or an RStudio server to process data and codes online, (iii) visualization services with an interactive interface to select model runs, and (iv) automated reporting to dynamically generate documents of results (Figure 1; please visit the current IOTC_SS3 VRE home page for more information and to join).

The first part of the work consisted of testing the feasibility of reproducing past IOTC SS3 stock assessment models of tropical tunas and billfish (provided by the IOTC and related consultants) on the BlueBridge infrastructure. We then repackage the SS3 codes so that they can be parametrized, executed and edited online from a simple web page, with standardized data outputs. A collaborative environment such as the VRE uses simple interfaces to facilitate the storage and access of the data and source codes necessary to replicate past results or to explore new parametrizations of the model. As the VRE is a work in progress, we will present an offline R Shiny application to showcase the kind of automatic outputs that can be visualized. We will present an example of an automatic report created from an automated SS3 run. We encourage suggestions from the group on the parameters that are tested and changed most frequently during working groups, and the specific outputs that the group would like to visualize to investigate the model.



Figure 1: **Overview of VRE services.** The user (client) accesses the scientific cloud server of the VRE from their local PC. The VRE uses past model parameters and data inputs to inform and compile the SS3 model for the specified species. Web services are provided for programmatic access, such as data discovery, access, and processing. Online applications are available and include Web Forms to parametrize models without requiring advanced coding skills; Rstudio online, which can act similarly to a 'local' Rstudio to launch and process codes and investigate results, but gives access to cloud services; and Sharelatex for automatic reporting of the results.

2. Methods

SS3 model codes (Linux versions 3.24 and 3.3) were provided by the NOAA/SS3 team and were successfully compiled on the Linux-based Rstudio online of the BlueBridge infrastructure ([?Coro et al., 2017]). Currently, SS3 is available to

researchers with an NOAA VLab account (visit the NOAA VLab website to request access), but we have confirmed that it is acceptable to the developers and maintainers of SS3 that we make the software available to users in the format of the VRE (*pers. comm.*, R. Methot). While both versions of SS3 were successfully compiled, we currently use version 3.24 to replicate the model examples to which we have access. We plan to make the updated SS version 3.3 available as it becomes required by the user community.

2.1 Scenarios of use

A single run of the "simple" stock assessment model example (provided by the SS3 team and accessed from NOAA's SS3 virtual laboratory) was executed in 15 seconds. Additionally, we tested several previous stock assessment models, provided by the IOTC and their consultants, including past assessments of swordfish (SWO, *Xiphias gladius*), bigeye tuna (BET; *Thunnus obesus*), and yellowfin tuna (YFT; *Thunnus albacares*). Models are run without the Hessian uncertainty calculations, as is common practice (*pers. comm.* Adam Langley, IOTC consultant). One run of each of these models on a personal computer varies considerably (Table 2.1). Based on these run times, we identified various scenarios of use, and calculated the CPU resources they require (Table 2.1).

Table 1: Minutes required for each of the SS3 models currently available as run (without Hessian uncertainty calculations) from a personal laptop or from the Rstudio online available on the VRE.

Model	Laptop	Rstudio online
simple	0.2	0.3
SWO	2.8	2.9
BET	24.3	27.8
YFT	.4	0.5

Table 2: Scenarios of expected use of the VRE for the stock assessment, using YFT run time as an example. For one simulation of an IOTC YFT example code takes about 30 seconds to run on the Rstudio online infrastructure.

ID	Summary	CPUs required
Scenario 1	A consultant developing a model	(0,5*10000)/(3*24*60) =
	and running sensitivity analy-	2 CPUs
	ses before the stock assessment	
	(10,000 iterations). Results re-	
	quired within 1 day for a total of	
	3 days (i.e. allowing for 3 major	
	modifications to the model).	
Scenario 2	A consultant making modifica-	(0,5*1000)/60 = 8 CPUs
	tions on the model during the	
	stock assessment $(1,000$ itera-	
	tions). Results required in 1 hour	
	for 1 day of the meeting.	
Scenario 3	Meeting participants individu-	
	ally exploring parameters	
Scenario 3a	One simulation per user, approx-	30 CPUs available
	imately 30 users. Available for	throughout meeting
	the full duration of the meeting,	
	e.g. 5 days.	
Scenario 3b	Each user allowed 10 itera-	30*10 = 300 CPUs
	tions. Results required imme-	
	diately (i.e., duration of single	
	run). Schedule could be speci-	
	fied for a period of time within a	
	single day.	

2.2 Work flow

The work flow currently follows four main steps (Figure 2). The first step is to define the specifications and simulations desired for the model run(s). SS3 requires four files to run the model [Methot, 2013]: starter.ss, forecast.ss, control.ctl, and data.dat. We developed these four files into the R functions: writeS-tarter(), writeForecast(), writeControl(), and writeDat(), respectively, such that the parameters and data can be input simply and the files can be compiled automatically, saving time and avoiding error. A wrapper function, ss3.R, reads

the inputs from .csv input tables, within which input data tables are nested (see Appendix I for an example of the input files for YFT), and inserts these parameters and data into the write*() functions. The model .ss executable is then run on the four files that are produced. The ss3.R wrapper then uses the SS_output() function of the r4ss R package [Taylor et al., 2011] to read the outputs of the model run. The results are given as list, which is then converted from the .Rdata format to a standardized netcdf format (Figure 3). Netcdf is a widely-used format that allows data from multiple runs to be archived to an open source Thredds data server (not yet established), such that assessment results can be accessed remotely and reproduced in any computing environment in the future.

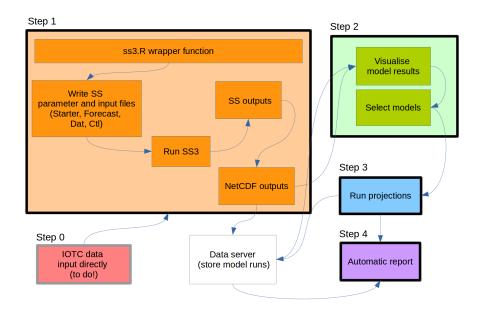


Figure 2: Work flow of the SS3 VRE outlined in four main steps. Step 1 consists of inputting data, parametrizing, and running the model. SS outputs are transformed to NetCDF and will be stored on a data server. Step 2 allows users to visualize the results of the model run(s) and select the best case model from which to make projections in Step 3. Projections will also be stored on the data server. Step 4 compiles the results of the work flow into an automatic report. Step 0, yet to be implemented, will automatically input new data directly from the IOTC database into the model at Step 1.

Based on expert advice (pers. comm., Dan Fu and Sylvain Bonhommeau),

we currently restructure the output to include information necessary to create the Kobe stock status plot (i.e., B.Bmsy, and F.Fmsy), time series of biomass in absolute numbers and relative to B0, recruitment variations, catch per unit effort, catch-at-age, movement data, and information on selectivity (Figure 3; see Appendix 2 for complete list of outputs).

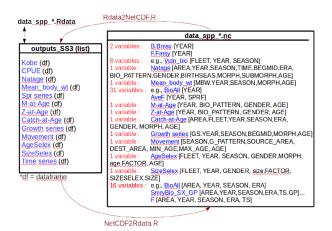


Figure 3: Examples of the SS output of the model run that are converted to a standardized netcdf format. SS model results are read by the SS_output() function of the r4ss R package [Taylor et al., 2011], which gives a list of multiple data frames (e.g., outputs_SS3). The dimensions of the data frames within this list are then defined, and variables are put into a netcdf file. The standardized netcdf format will then be saved on a Thredds data server.

This step of the work flow can be executed by running these functions in the R environment through the BlueBridge Rstudio online infrastructure, or from Web Forms to allow users to focus on parametrization of the runs rather than interaction with the programming language. The single-run structure will be converted to a web processing service to enable individual users to parametrize aspects of the model. This WPS version will be parallelized within the FAO supercomputing resources, allowing multiple iterations to be executed simultaneously, and thus incorporating uncertainty.

In Step 2, we package and display the results of the SS3 runs using a Shyny Proxy application within the VRE with output visualizations of each model run. This allows the user to select the best model(s) for retrospective analysis, and then projections (Step 3). The results of the retrospective analyses and the projections will stored on the Thredds data server. Step 4 integrates the final results of the work flow into an automatically generated report of the stock assessment, using R and Latex. This automated report will allow users to quickly update the stock assessment and incorporate the scientific advice given during the meeting. ShareLatex will be available on the VRE to compile both the R and Latex codes on the same R server, thus ensuring that codes are compiled in the same environment, facilitating a collaborative editing process of the final document ("Google doc-like" collaborative editing).

2.3 Efforts to comply with standards

Efforts have been made to make this work as generic as possible so that as much of the work flow can be useful for other cases (e.g., species, models). The R codes are available through Web Services. Metadata will be provided with generic formatting and outputs (figures and tables) that will describe work flows and results to allow data and process discovery and replication of the assessment. Furthermore, the SS outputs are saved in the widely-used NetCDF data format, allowing them to be used in any computing environment. Furthermore, these NetCDF data will be stored on a dedicated server (e.g., Thredds), with online data access.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Online collaborative environment

The BlueBridge project enables an online collaborative environment by providing the infrastructure necessary to parametrize, visualize, and access a work flow on a VRE such as that described above (Figure 4). This environment will be available to a list of members who can share documents, messages, data and codes in both a public and private space. An Rstudio server will be incorporated into the environment that acts exactly as a desktop application, with a private work space for each member but that is configured to ensure that codes compile correctly. For users without experience in R, we will package these codes through a Web Processing Service, which allows the codes to run directly from a web page in the VRE, such that users can focus on parametrization of the model instead of programming (not yet implemented).

At the WPTT19, we will present examples of the work flow by executing a single run of the last YFT model (run time of 30 seconds) by launching the code through the Rstudio online application (Figure 5). We will show examples of an

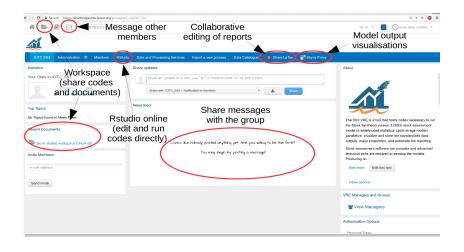


Figure 4: A screenshot of the IOTC_SS3 VRE display. From this space, users can share codes, documents, and messages, can edit or run codes directly from the Rstudio online application, can edit automatic reports through the ShareLaTex application, and can visualize model outputs through the ShynyProxy application.

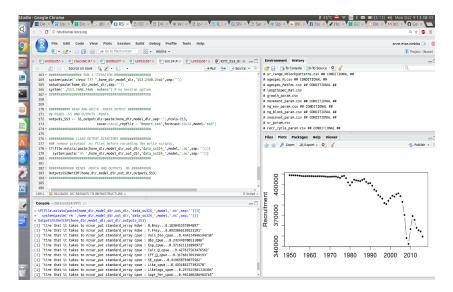


Figure 5: The RStudio online application of the VRE functions exactly as a local Rstudio, except that it is accessible within the browser, and the environment is already configured to run the functions that are shared in the VRE, facilitating the use of the shared online code.

R Shiny output visualization (Figure 6), as well as an example of the generation of an automatic report using the collaborative ShareLateX option on the VRE (Figure 7).

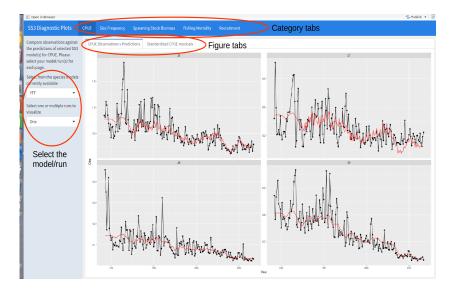


Figure 6: The R Shiny allows users to visualize the results of current or past model runs, allowing runs to be overlaid to compare results. The Shiny for the IOTC_SS3 VRE includes diagnostic plots aimed at comparing between observations and predictions of the model(s). The plots currently included are CPUE observations versus predictions, standardized residuals of CPUE, size frequency plots of aggregated length frequency, and mean length and weight distributions, spawning stock biomass, fishing mortality, and recruitment variations.

3.2 Benefits of the VRE

The VRE provides an online collaborative environment that enables individual users access to the computing resources and infrastructure of the BlueBridge project. This means that runs can be executed on servers and cloud infrastructure with no need for local computing power. This thereby allows more runs to be performed in less time (with parallelization), enabling more uncertainty calculations to be included in the stock assessment. With the decreased time necessary to compute numerous runs, major changes to the parametrization of the model can be performed in the context of the working group.

The VRE provides a collaborative environment for members, with a workspace to share documents, codes, and messages. Source codes are now accessible that were not before. Programming on the VRE is also practical for users as the computing environment is already compiled for all users and no installation is



Figure 7: Sharelatex gives users the options to automatically generate reports/figures and collaborate editing of the text with other VRE members. The user accesses the Sharelatex option from the VRE (see Figure 4), and has options to either create their own project, or edit projects that are shared with them. The Sharelatex dashboard is divided into three main panels: the project menu (left), which includes the files necessary to compile the document (e.g., the *.tex file where the latex/knitr code is written, the bibliography file (*.bib), and the figures to insert), the console (middle) where the code can be edited, and the compiled pdf (right).

necessary. For those users without advanced programming skills, the VRE will provide a graphical user interface (via a Web Processing Service), such that models can be easily parametrized, increasing the number of potential users and participation in model development. Finally, the VRE ensures a backup of the selected runs (with detailed metadata describing the workflow, specifications, results and data) stored on its Thredds server, enabling reproducibility, and data and process discovery.

Furthermore, model outputs can be browsed and visualized with graphical interfaces (Shiny). Reports can be at least partially automated with plots automatically generated with knitr. The text of the report can be edited collaboratively with Sharelatex.

The end goal of the SS3 VRE is to allow participants of stock assessments to use the VRE interactively at working groups in order to explore input parameters and results, to store and replicate past results, to give more transparency to the decision-making process, and to enhance collaboration within working groups. Improving the ease of use of the complex SS3 model will bring more transparency and collaboration within working groups by providing "nonmodelers" with a possibility to test hypotheses and explore uncertainty for stock assessment. Technical performance, document production, and harmonization of content are expected to be enhanced due to this increased participation. We hope to show the potential of this environment to foster collaboration and incorporation of scientific advice within working groups. We particularly encourage feedback on these tools and their application from the community of users to improve their utility in the future.

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4. Appendix

Appendix 1: An example of the input table, using YFT 2015 stock as sessment inputs.

	STARTER.SS
variables	YFT
version	3.21e
filename	$/test_YFT/starter.ss$
comments	starter.ss made using starterSS324.R
model	YFT
init_vals	1
$display_deets$	0
age_str_rep	1
checkup	0
param_trace	0
cum_report	1
full_priors	1
soft_bounds	1
num_data_out	3
$turn_off_est$	7
MCMCburn	10
MCMCthin	1
jitter	0
sdrep_start	-1
sdrep_end	-2
n_sd_yrs	0
sd_yr_vector	
final_conv	0.075
retro_yr	0
minage_sumbio	1
dep_basis	1
frac_depden	1
SPR_rep_basis	2
F_rep_units	4
F4_age_range	1 28
F_rep_basis	2
endfile_val	999
	FORECAST.SS
variable	YFT
version	3.20b

comments	forecast.ss made using
	write SS324 Forecast. R
filename	$/test_YFT/forecast.ss$
benchmarks	1
MSY	2
$first_yr_avg_recF$	
$end_yr_avg_recF$	
$F_{-}mult$	
SPR_target	0.4
biomass_target	0.4
bmark_yrs	c(0,0,-7,0,-7,0)
$bmark_relF_basis$	1
forecast	2
$n_forecast_yrs$	4
F_scalar	1
Fcast_yrs	c(-7,0,-7,0)
control_rule	2
$control_rule_uplim$	0.01
$control_rule_lowlim$	0.001
$control_rule_buff$	1
n_fcast_loops	3
first_fcast_loop	3
$fcast_loop_ctl3$	0
$fcast_loop_ctl4$	0
$fcast_loop_ctl5$	0
$first_yr_capsall$	290
imp_err	0
rebuilder	0
rebuilder_Ydecl	-1
$rebuilder_Yinit$	-1
fleet_relF	1
$fcast_catch_basis$	2
fishery_names	FISHERY1
fishseas_F	1
$max_total_catch_fleet$	rep(-1,25)
$max_total_catch_area$	$\operatorname{rep}(-1,4)$
$fleet_assignment$	$\operatorname{rep}(0,25)$
allocation_fractions	
$n_forecast_catch$	0
Fcast_basis	2

$endfile_val$	999
	YFT.CTL
variable	YFT
version	3.21e
model	YFT
$n_{growth patterns}$	1
n_submorphs	1
$submorph_growth var$	
$morph_dist$	
$n_seasons_peryear$	1
n_areas	4
n_recrassign	2
recr_inter	0
$recr_assign_tab$	$read.csv(`/input/recr_assign_tab_YFT.csv',$
	sep=',',header=F)
n_move_defs	10
age_firstmove	2
$movement_def$	$read.csv(`/input/movement_def_YFT.csv', sep=`,`,$
	header=F)
$n_block_patterns$	0
$n_blocks_per_pattern$	
yr_range_Nblockpattern	s
$frac_female$	0.5
$natM_opt$	3
n_brk_pts	
age_brk_pts	
Lorenzen_ref_age	
$agespec_M$	$read.csv(`/input/agespec_M_YFT.csv', sep=`,`,$
	header=F)
$\operatorname{growth_mod}$	3
$\operatorname{growth_amin}$	1
$\operatorname{growth_amax}$	28
$agespec_K_amin$	12
$agespec_K_amax$	seq(2,13,by=1)
sd_add_to_laa	0
cv_patt	0
mat_opt	3
$agespec_MatFec$	<pre>read.csv('/input/agespec_MatFec_YFT.csv',sep=',', header=F)</pre>
$length spec_Mat$	·

first_mat_age	1
fec_opt	1
hermaph_opt	0
hermaph_seas	
include_males	
offset_method	1
time_var_adj	1
growth_param	read.csv('/input/growth_param_YFT.csv',sep=',',
0 I I I I	header=F)
$movement_param$	read.csv('/input/movement_param_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
mg_env	1
mg_env_param	read.csv('/input/mg_env_param_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
mg_block	0
mg_block_param	
param_seasonality	$\operatorname{rep}(0,10)$
seasonal_param	
$mg_ann_dev_phase$	7
sr_fun	3
sr_param	read.csv('/input/sr_param_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
sr_env_link	0
sr_env_target	0
do_recr_dev	1
recr_dev_begin_yr	101
recr_dev_end_yr	272
$recr_dev_phase$	3
adv_opt	0
$recr_dev_early_start$	
$recr_dev_early_phase$	
$forecast_recr_phase$	
$lambda_fcast_recr$	
last_yr_nobias	
$first_yr_nobias$	
last_yr_fullbias	
$first_rec_nobias$	
max_bias_adj	
recr_cycle_period	
\min_recr_dev	

max_recr_dev	
n_recr_devs	
n_recr_cycles	
recr_cycle_param	
recr_dev	
f_ballpark	0.1
$f_ballpark_yr$	220
f_method	3
max_f	2.9
f_start_val	
f_{-} phase	
n_f_inputs	
n_tuning	4
f_param	
$initF_param$	read.csv('/input/initF_param_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
Q_tab	read.csv('/input/q_tab_YFT.csv',
	sep=',',header=F)
Q_param	
$size_select_tab$	read.csv('/input/size_select_tab_YFT.csv',
	sep=',',header=F)
age_select_tab	read.csv('/input/age_select_tab_YFT.csv',
	sep=',',header=F)
$size_select_param$	
age_select_param	$read.csv('/input/age_select_param_YFT.csv',$
	sep=',',header=F)
do_tag	1
tag_param	read.csv('/input/tag_param_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
tag_param_rep	read.csv('/input/tag_param_rep_YFT.csv',
	sep=',',header=F)
tag_param_decay	read.csv('/input/tag_param_decay_YFT.csv',
	sep=',',header=F)
var_adj_factor	1
var_adj_tab	read.csv('/input/var_adj_tab_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
max_lambda_phase	1
sd_offset	1
n_changes_lambda	0
like_comp_tab	

read_specs	0
var_control	
$selex_std_bin$	
$growth_std_bin$	
NatAge_std_bin	
endfile_val	999
	YFT.DAT
Variable	YFT
model	YFT
version	3.24
start_yr	13
end_yr	276
n_seasons_peryear	1
$n_{months_{perseason}}$	3
spawning_season	1
n_fleets	25
n_surveys	4
n_areas	4
fishsurvey_names	FISHERY1%FISHERY2%FISHERY3%FISHERY4
	%FISHERY5%FISHERY6%FISHERY7%FISHERY8%FISHERY9
	%FISHERY10%FISHERY11%FISHERY12%FISHERY13
	%FISHERY14%FISHERY15%FISHERY16%FISHERY17
	%FISHERY18%FISHERY19%FISHERY20%FISHERY21
	%FISHERY22%FISHERY23%FISHERY24%FISHERY25
	%SURVEY1%SURVEY2%SURVEY3%SURVEY4
sample_timing	rep(0.5,29)
fleet_area	c(rep(1,9),2,3,rep(4,4),rep(2,3),4,4,rep(1,4),4,1,2,3,4))
catch_units	rep(1,25)
se_logcatch	rep(0.01,25)
n_genders	1
n_ages	28
init_equil_catch	rep(0,25)
n_catch_obs	264
catch	read.csv('/input/catch_YFT.csv',
caten	sep=',',header=F)
n enuo obs	683
n_cpue_obs	
cpue_units	read.csv('/input/cpue_units_YFT.csv',sep=',', header=F)
cpue	$read.csv('/input/cpue_YFT.csv',$
	sep=',',header=F)

$n_{fleets_w_discards}$	0
n_discard_obs	0
discard_units	
discards	
n_mnbodywt_obs	0
df_mnbodywt	30
mnbodywt	
lengthbin_method	2
binwidth	2
pop_minsize	10
pop_maxsize	198
n_popbins	
lowedge_popbin	
comp_tail	1.00E-005
add_to_comp	1.00E-007
$bin_to_combine_genders$	0
n_lengthbins	95
lowedge_lenbin	seq(10,198,by=2)
n_length_obs	1857
$length_comp$	read.csv('/input/length_comp_YFT.csv',sep=',',
	header=F)
n_agebins	0
lowedge_agebins	
lowedge_agebins n_ageerr_defs	0
n_ageerr_defs	
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix	0
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs	0 0
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method	0 0 1
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders	0 0 1
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp	0 0 1 1
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs	0 0 1 1
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age	0 0 1 1 0
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar	0 0 1 1 0 7
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar n_env_obs	0 0 1 1 0 7 980
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar n_env_obs	0 0 1 1 0 7 980 read.csv('/input/env_data_YFT.csv',sep=',',
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar n_env_obs env_data	0 0 1 1 0 7 980 read.csv('/input/env_data_YFT.csv',sep=',', header=F)
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar n_env_obs env_data	0 0 1 1 0 7 980 read.csv('/input/env_data_YFT.csv',sep=',', header=F)
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar n_env_obs env_data	0 0 1 1 0 7 980 read.csv('/input/env_data_YFT.csv',sep=',', header=F)
n_ageerr_defs age_matrix n_age_obs Lbin_method agebin_combine_genders age_comp n_mnsizeage_obs mn_size_at_age n_envvar n_env_obs env_data n_sizefreq_methods nbins_per_method sizefreq_units	0 0 1 1 0 7 980 read.csv('/input/env_data_YFT.csv',sep=',', header=F)

$n_sizefreq_obs$	
lowedge_sizefreq_bins	
sizefreq	
do_tags	1
n_tag_groups	131
n_recap_events	1485
mix_period	3
max_tracking	16
release	$read.csv('/input/release_YFT.csv',$
	sep=',',header=F)
recapture	$read.csv(`/input/recapture_YFT.csv', sep=', ',$
	header=F)
do_morphcomp	0
n_stockcomp	
n_stocks	
mincomp	
stockcomp	
endfile value	999

Variable	Dimensions
	Kobe Data Frame
B.Bmsy	YEAR
F.Fmsy	YEAR
	CPUE Data Frame
Vuln _b io	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Obs	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Exp	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
$Calc_Q$	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Eff_Q	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
SE	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Dev	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Like	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Likelogs	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
Supr_Per	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON
]	NATAGE Data Frame
natage	AREA, YEAR, SEASON, TIME,
	BEGMID, ERA, BIO_PATTERN,
	GENDER, BIRTHSEAS, MORPH,
	SUBMORPH, AGE
Μ	IEAN_BODY_WT Data
meanbodywt	MBW.YEAR, SEASON,
	MORPH,AGE
SF	PR_SERIES Data Frame
Bio_all_spr	YEAR
Bio_Smry_spr	YEAR
SPBzero	YEAR
SPBfished	YEAR
SPBfished/R	YEAR
SPR	YEAR
SPR_std	YEAR
Y/R	YEAR
GenTime	YEAR
F_std	YEAR
Num_Smry	YEAR
MnAge_Smry	YEAR

Appendix 2: Outputs variables and their respective dimensions that are currently transformed into netcdf from the .Rdata as generated by the SS_output function of the r4ss R package.

Enc_Catch	YEAR	
Dead_Catch	YEAR	
Retain_Catch	YEAR	
Enc_Catch_B	YEAR	
Dead_Catch_B	YEAR	
$Retain_Catch_B$	YEAR	
Enc_Catch_N	YEAR	
$Dead_Catch_N$	YEAR	
$Retain_Catch_N$	YEAR	
$MnAge_Catch$	YEAR	
SPB	YEAR	
Recruits	YEAR	
Tot_Exploit	YEAR	
$More_F(by_Morph)$	YEAR	
sum_Apical_F	YEAR	
F=Z-M	YEAR	
spr	YEAR	
aveF	YEAR, SPRF	
$\max F$	YEAR, SPRF	
M	ATAGE Data Frame	
Matage	YEAR, BIO_PATTERN, GENDER,	
	AGE	
ZA	ATAGE Data Frame	
Zatage	YEAR, BIO_PATTERN, GENDER,	
	AGE	
CATCH-AT-AGE Data Frame		
catage	AREA, FLEET, YEAR, SEASON,	
	ERA, GENDER, MORPH, AGE	
GROWTH SERIES Data Frame		
growthseries	GS.YEAR, SEASON, BEGMID,	
	MORPH, AGE	
MOVEMENT Data Frame		
movement	SEASON, G_PATTERN,	
	SOURCE_AREA, DEST_AREA,	
	MIN_AGE, MAX_AGE, AGE	
AGESELEX Data Frame		
ageselex	FLEET, YEAR, SEASON, GENDER,	
-	MORPH, age.FACTOR, AGE	
SIZESELEX Data Frame		
L		

sizeselex	FLEET,	YEAR,	GENDER	,
	size.FACTOR, SIZESELEX.SIZE			
TIME SERIES Data Frame				
Bio_all_ts	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA	_
Bio_smry_ts	AREA, YEAR, SEASON, ERA			
SpawnBio	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA	
Recruit_0	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA	
${\rm Spbio}_{-}{\rm GP}$	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA	
SPB_vir_LH	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA	
$SmryBio_SX_GP$	AREA, Y	TEAR, SEA	ASON, ERA	,
	TS.GP			
$SmryNum_SX_GP$	AREA, Y	TEAR, SEA	ASON, ERA	,
	TS.GP			
sel_B_ts	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
$dead_B_{ts}$	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
$retain_B_ts$	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
sel_N_ts	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
$dead_N_ts$	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
$retain_N_ts$	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
obs_cat_ts	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	
F_ts	AREA, YE	AR, SEASO	N, ERA, TS	