## 1. INTRODUCTION

California Sheephead (*Semicossyphus pulcher*; previously *Pimelometopon pulchrum*) is in the genus Labridae. Most species in this genus are small reef fish that are not exploited. In contrast, California Sheephead can grow to sizes that exceed 80 cm and are found in shallow temperate waters along the Pacific coast from Monterey Bay, California to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico (Figure 1.1). In this report, we describe the first quantitative stock assessment of this species although it has been fished commercially and recreationally for a large part of the past century.

Sections 2 through 7 of this report were prepared prior to a formal stock assessment review, and are mostly unchanged from the material that was initially presented to the Review Panel. Many aspects of the assessment model were changed during the review, and the Panel asked for some follow-up analyses. The final assessment model based on the review is given in section 8, and is the Assessment Team's best effort to accommodate the Review Panel's recommendations. However, Section 8 itself was not reviewed by the Panel.