

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
ESTABLISH SALMON MODEL DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

After considering several recommendations for forming a Model Evaluation Workgroup (MEW), the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) recommends the formation of a new Council advisory body to fulfill this function. Given the critical importance of the coho and chinook Fishery Regulation Assessment Models (FRAMs) to the Council salmon management process, it is appropriate that the MEW be a standing committee of the Council and receive support associated with this status. The initial focus of the MEW should be placed on the chinook and coho FRAMs.

In addition to members representing the management agencies that currently are most familiar with the development, data requirements, and usage of the FRAMs, the MEW membership should include members of existing advisory bodies such as the Salmon Technical Team (STT) and SSC. Given that Canadian stocks are incorporated into coho and chinook FRAM, and that coho FRAM is being extended for use by the Pacific Salmon Commission, Canadian participation in the MEW should be encouraged.

The SSC recommends that the initial tasks of the MEW focus on the following four prioritized items:

1. Document the model structure and algorithms used in the model. We suggest that this task be the foremost priority of the MEW with a goal of completing it, so it can be reviewed by the SSC prior to the November meeting of the Council.
2. Document the data used as inputs to the model and model parameter estimating procedures. This should include an assessment of data quality and adequacy for use in the models, as well as the source of the data (agency and individual supplying the data), and a timetable for data requests. The SSC would like the Council to consider convening a workshop for sometime in 2004 to help address this item. If the Council decides to convene a workshop, the SSC would like to participate in drafting the Terms of Reference for the workshop.
3. Write a Programmer's Guide to the FRAMs. This is needed to facilitate maintenance of the model code.
4. Write a User's Guide to the FRAMs. This is needed to enable more people to use the FRAMs. The User's Guide should include information relating to, (a) input data requirements and data sources; (b) annual model calibration procedures; (c) operating instructions; and (d) interpretation of model results.

We recommend that Items 1 and 2 receive the immediate attention of the MEW, and these tasks should be considered when identifying the initial membership of the MEW. For the MEW to be successful, it is critical that interested agencies commit adequate resources to this effort. Membership in the Work Group may change as its immediate tasks change. Members with specific areas of expertise should be appointed as required on an as-needed basis.