

COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURE

Scientific and Statistical Committee

Approved by Council: 07/20/83

Revised: 07/10/85, 09/16/87, 04/06/95, 09/18/98, 09/15/00, 06/18/02

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PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC).

OBJECTIVES AND DUTIES

When requested by the Council chairperson or executive director, the SSC shall:

1. Provide expert scientific and technical advice to the Council on the development of fishery management policy, establishing the goals and objectives of fishery management plans (FMP) and amendments, and the preparation of such FMPs and amendments.
2. Assist the Council in the evaluation of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council's development and amendment of any FMP.
3. Assist the Council in determining what statistical, biological, economic, social, or other scientific information is needed for the development of an FMP or amendment that meets the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) and advise the Council as to the best way of obtaining this information, including identifying research needs and entities with ongoing research programs that may be able to develop the needed information. (See Council operating procedure entitled Development and Communication of Research and Data Needs.)
4. Advise the Council on preparing comments on any application for foreign fishing transmitted to the Council by the U.S. Department of State.
5. Review and evaluate FMPs and amendments to determine if they meet the National Standards of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable laws.
6. Advise the Council on preparing comments on any FMP or amendment prepared by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) or the Secretary's delegate which are transmitted to the Council pursuant to Section 304(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.
7. Comment on any proposed regulations which the Council deems necessary to implement any FMP or amendment which is prepared by the Council.
8. Assist the Council in establishing criteria for judging the effectiveness of an FMP or amendment.
9. Resolve technical disputes between planning team members and/or organizations before the issues come before the Council. (NOTE: See Council operating procedure entitled Salmon Estimation Methodology Review.)
10. Review and seek improvement of stock assessments and fishery analyses. Planning teams will be required to be present at SSC meetings when stock assessments are discussed and pertinent documents will be distributed two weeks in advance when possible.

11. Perform such other necessary and appropriate duties as may be required by the Council to carry out its functions under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

COMPOSITION

Committee members shall be appointed for each category listed below (15 members). The committee shall consist of three social scientists, of which at least two shall have economic expertise.

1. State fishery management agencies (4)
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - California Department of Fish and Game
 - Idaho Department of Fish and Game
2. National Marine Fisheries Service (4)
 - Alaska Fisheries Science Center
 - Northwest Fisheries Science Center (2—one with expertise in groundfish stock assessment)
 - Southwest Fisheries Science Center
3. Indian agency with fishery management responsibility (1)
4. At-large positions (6)

MEMBERSHIP

Term of Members

Agency and tribal members shall be appointed by the Council to serve indefinite terms. At-large members shall be appointed by the Council for three-year terms commencing on January 1 and expiring December 31 three years thereafter, and may be reappointed at the pleasure of the Council. At-large vacancy appointments shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacancy. All members shall serve without compensation; they may, however, be reimbursed for their actual expenses while traveling to meetings on official Council business.

Termination of Membership

A committee member may be replaced at the Council's discretion if he/she: (1) transfers employment or moves to a different location, (2) is absent from two meetings in any 12 month period, or (3) appears unable to fulfill his/her obligations as a committee member.

Replacement of Members

Upon receipt of a letter of resignation, expiration of three-year terms, or after Council action to remove a member, the executive director shall (1) contact the agency which the former member represented for a nominee or (2) for an at-large member, advertise for a replacement. Announcements for nominations for at-large members shall be distributed widely and be specific about the duties and responsibilities.

Alternate Members

Each committee member representing an agency or tribe (categories 1, 2, and 3 on page 2) may appoint a designee. Such designees may participate in committee deliberations as a regular member and shall be reimbursed for expenses. Designees for at-large committee members are not authorized.

Officers

The chairperson and vice chairperson of the SSC shall be elected by majority vote of committee members present and voting. Such officers shall be confirmed by the Council chairperson and shall serve one-year terms.

Subcommittees

The committee may establish such subcommittees as it deems necessary to facilitate its duties. In general, there will be a subcommittee for each of the Council's FMPs. In addition, a socioeconomic subcommittee will be formed to work closely with team/staff economists and sociologists.

MEETINGS

The committee shall meet at the request of the committee chairperson, with the approval of the Council executive director, as often as necessary to fulfill its responsibilities. The usual time for meetings shall be Monday and Tuesday of the week of each Council meeting.

Public Participation

The public will be permitted to comment on items relative to the agenda at a time to be announced in the *Federal Register* and a Council news release. Comments may be limited if deemed necessary by the committee chairperson. Written statements also may be submitted during the public comment period. The public will not be permitted to interject comments during the meeting at any time other than the established comment period unless asked to do so by the chairperson or a committee member. Members of the public may be asked to leave the meeting at the chairperson's discretion if their conduct is impeding the orderly progress of the meeting.

The granting of permission for the public to tape all or any part of the meeting is at the discretion of the committee chairperson and such permission must be obtained in advance.

Copies of this operating procedure shall be available from the Council office to any member of the public planning to attend the committee meetings.

Public Notification of Meetings

Notice of committee meetings shall be published in the *Federal Register* and made available to news media.

MINUTES

A Council staff member shall attend and draft minutes of each committee. Such minutes shall be submitted for approval by the majority of committee members at the next committee meeting.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to drafting meeting minutes, a Council staff member shall be assigned to assist the committee with coordination, organization, and format problems, and to provide other expertise needed by the committee on a case-by-case basis.

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