

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

Proposed Ecosystem Subcommittee Meeting Planning Agenda Item

For the last three years, the Scientific and Statistical Committee Ecosystem Subcommittee (SSCES) has scheduled a meeting with members of the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA) team in the fall of the year, usually in conjunction with the September Council meeting. The primary objective of this meeting has been to conduct technical review of selected indicators in the annual ecosystem status report. Occasionally, other aspects of the CCIEA effort have been reviewed if the CCIEA team considers them sufficiently developed to benefit from SSC review, and if there is potential for the topics to be useful to the Council process. The timing of the review allows the CCIEA team sufficient time to incorporate SSC recommendations in the next iteration of the ecosystem status report delivered to the Council the following March. A regular schedule of technical review has improved the usefulness and scientific quality of the annual ecosystem report, and the SSC recommends that these reviews continue.

The SSC also recommends that the Council consider a more formal approach to identifying the list of ecosystem topics for review. Specifically, the SSC recommends an agenda item for the March Council meeting that would identify the list of ecosystem-related topics to for review during the September meeting. This agenda item would follow the CCIEA report agenda item. This approach would allow for advisory body input, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) input, and Council guidance on the list of review topics. The SSC recommends that NMFS (i.e., the CCIEA team) be tasked with developing an initial list of proposed topics for consideration in March. Advisory bodies should also have the opportunity to propose topics for consideration, provided that they identify the responsible parties for analyses to be reviewed. To assist the Council and advisory bodies in recommending topics for review, each proposed topic should include a narrative no longer than a couple of paragraphs addressing the following:

1. Short description of the topic including analytical methods used, and the responsible party.
2. Documentation that will be available for the review meeting.
3. Short discussion of how the topic might inform the Council process.

Establishing a formal review process is not intended to make it impossible to add ecosystem information to an assessment, or add a new indicator to annual ecosystem report, without going through this process first.

Pacific Sardine Update Assessment

The SSC discussed options for the sardine update assessment review tentatively scheduled for March 2018. The SSC agreed that a webinar would be an acceptable format for reviewing the

update assessment, so long as it was scheduled with sufficient lead time to allow for subsequent work and in-person review prior to the April 2018 Council meeting if problems were identified. Scheduling a webinar at a time that works for the entire CPS subcommittee and relevant advisory body representatives may be challenging.

Sablefish Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)

Assuming that the sablefish MSE is ready for review at the March 2018 meeting, it will likely require two to three hours on the SSC agenda.

Research and Data Needs Document

The SSC began planning for the Pacific Fishery Management Council Five-year Research and Data Needs document to be completed in 2018. The SSC will provide a draft document by the briefing book deadline for the April 2018 Council meeting. The SSC does not anticipate major changes to the format of the overall document. However, the SSC will emphasize revising and updating the current document to make clear which items have the highest priority and what progress has been made on the highest priority items from the 2013 Research and Data Needs document.

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