

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
RESEARCH AND DATA NEEDS DOCUMENT – FINAL ADOPTION

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the September 2018 draft of the Research and Data Needs document (Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1). The SSC endorses the changes made to the document since June 2018 and recommends the following additional edits:

- On pages 12-13, remove the bullet points without associated text
- On page 31, drop the placeholder for a reference
- On page 34, replace the highlighted text with the words "spawning biomass"
- On page 73, delete "(see also Section 2.3)"

The amount of effort spent reviewing and revising the Research and Data Needs document by the SSC, other Council advisory bodies, and Council staff should be commensurate with the document's usefulness. Substantially improving the Research and Data Needs document and process would likely require dedicated funding or staff support, with a clearly identified party responsible for coordinating the process. The SSC recommends that the next Research and Data Needs document be considerably shortened, and if sufficient resources are available, it should be written with greater consistency among sections. The SSC suggests consideration of the general format adopted by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), which maintains a top ten list of priorities along with a larger electronic database of research priorities (<https://www.npfmc.org/research-priorities/>). The workload associated with the current format of the Research and Data Needs document makes it prohibitive to update the document more often than every five years, but a more streamlined format could allow for more frequent updating and tracking of progress.

The SSC recommends that the 2023 Research and Data Needs document not attempt to comprehensively report on the progress made on previously identified priorities. In retrospect, the SSC found that the benefits gained from this exercise for the 2018 document were small compared to the major costs in time and effort.

Regardless of any changes to document format or process, the Council may wish to set a limit on the number of highest priorities to be specified for each fishery management plan or research topic area. It would also be useful to solicit input from the full suite of advisory bodies and the public on their highest priorities very early in the process of developing the next iteration of the document.