

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

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) would prefer to continue to have a remote participation option for members for the September 2020 meeting if it is held in Spokane. If the meeting were to be solely in-person, several members may not attend due to health concerns and/or uncertainty about schools/day care being open in the fall. In addition, the SSC has concerns about the mismatch between the Council meeting platform and restrictions on NOAA employees using that platform. While we were able to conduct this meeting smoothly, it could have been improved if NOAA employees could share their screens when presenting and view the screens of others sharing. There were also concerns from NOAA employees about the public display of their home phone numbers when they call in.

The SSC offers the following guidance on the future Council meeting agenda and workload planning agenda items, as well as a response to the Executive Director's request for comment on [Agenda Item A.3, Supplemental Attachment 4](#).

The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee, along with the states, Science Centers, ageing laboratories, and other interested Council advisory body representatives will hold a webinar this summer to discuss any changes to catch estimation methods and prioritize ageing efforts as described in the Terms of Reference for the Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Stock Assessment Review Process for 2021-2022. The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee may conduct a methodology review of the Elasmobranch Harvest Control Rule in the late fall or early winter.

The SSC CPS Subcommittee recommends holding a webinar in July or early August 2020, to review the work on the sardine rebuilding plan. There may also be a need to discuss possible responses in the event of a substantially modified or missing acoustic trawl method (ATM) survey for 2020, due to the restrictions to field work in response to COVID-19.

The SSC agreed that final SSC review and, if appropriate, adoption of the length-based stock assessment and remotely operated vehicles methodologies should be a high priority item for September. The SSC also gives high priority to the review of the ongoing Sablefish Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), so that the analysts have time to be responsive to SSC and Council feedback. The analysts have time constraints for completion of the MSE, and stakeholder engagement is important throughout the process. Stakeholder engagement via the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada is also being planned.

The SSC Ecosystem Subcommittee plans to meet for one day prior to the September SSC meeting to review items from the California Current Ecosystem Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team, and notes, if this meeting is to be conducted as a webinar, there is flexibility with the timing as there will be no travel costs incurred.

The SSC discussed the procedural change proposed by NMFS in [Agenda Item A.3, Supplemental Attachment 4](#), to offer guidance on management responses to changing the status of a stock from known to unknown. The SSC recommends more clarity in the first paragraph in the approach section under c2 (Reject New Assessment, Use Previous Assessment Results with No New Data), as rejecting new data should only be done with good justification. If a clear problem with a specific subset of the data can be identified, it would likely be better to simply exclude the problematic subset of the new data and then proceed with the new assessment, or at minimum update the old assessment with the non-problematic subset of the new data (similar to c1). If a clear problem with the new data cannot be specifically identified, the conflict between the new data and the old model structure could indicate inappropriate assumptions in the previous assessment, and thus simply reverting to the output of the last assessment would be questionable (i.e., the situation described in c3).

PFMC  
06/17/20

<b>Proposed Workshops and SSC Subcommittee Meetings for 2020</b>							
<b>Workshop/Meeting</b>		<b>Potential Dates</b>	<b>Sponsor/Tentative Location</b>	<b>SSC Reps.</b>	<b>Additional Reviewers</b>	<b>AB Reps.</b>	<b>Council Staff</b>
<b>1</b>	Data Needs for Stock Assessments	Summer 2020	Council/Webinar	Groundfish Subcommittee Members	NA	GMT GAP	DeVore
<b>2</b>	Review of Sardine Rebuilding Work and ATM update	Summer 2020	Council/Webinar	CPS Subcommittee Members	NA	CPSMT CPSAS	Griffin
<b>3</b>	Review of California sea lion pup count and growth rate as an indicator of forage conditions, the habitat compression index, port-specific revenue indices, the natural origin central valley fall Chinook stock indicator	September 10	Council/Spokane, WA	Ecosystem, Economics, and Salmon Subcommittee Members	TBD	TBD	DeVore Dahl
<b>4</b>	Salmon Methodology Review	October TBD	Council/TBD	Salmon Subcommittee	NA	STT MEW	Ehlke
<b>5</b>	Elasmobranch Harvest Control Rule Methodology Review	Fall/Winter 2020	Council/TBD	Groundfish Subcommittee Members	TBD	GMT GAP	DeVore
<b>6</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee	2021?	NPFMC/Sitka, AK	4 TBD	NA	NA	DeVore