



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

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# Developing a West Coast Regional 'Best Scientific Information Available' Framework

**Kristen Koch**, Science Director - SW Fisheries Science Center

**Kevin Werner**, Science Director - NW Fisheries Science Center

**Ryan Wulff**, Asst. Regional Administrator - West Coast Region

**Sarah Shoffler**, SW Fisheries Science Center

**Jim Hastie**, NW Fisheries Science Center

**Pacific Fishery Management Council**

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# Presentation Overview

- Background
- BSIA criteria
- Format of Framework
- BSIA Points of Contact with SSC
- BSIA Disagreements between NMFS and SSC
- Moving Forward

# Background

The [NMFS PD 01-101-10](#) Procedural Directive requires each Region to complete development of a BSIA framework by May 7, 2022

- This final collaborative document would need to be considered by the April 2022 Council meeting at the latest (preferably by March, if scheduling permits)
- Describes the key science development and review process for each FMP, culminating in BSIA determinations for:
  - Evaluating stock status, relative to adopted criteria/standards
  - Specifying annual catch parameters, as appropriate
- *It is ultimately the responsibility of NOAA Fisheries to make stock status determinations, approve catch specifications, and certify that these decisions are consistent with BSIA.* The agency relies on input and advice from the SSCs and peer review processes
- Documents differences between West Coast framework and the general NMFS BSIA framework (as described in the PD)
- Complements the [2016 FR Notice](#), Re: Nat. Standard 2
  - which describes joint NMFS-Council regional peer review processes (incl. our STAR), and acknowledges the legitimacy of outside processes; specifically mentioned are those associated with HMS, Pacific salmon, and hake treaties.

# BSIA Criteria

- [NS2 Guidelines](#) (NMFS, 2013) identify seven criteria for BSIA
  - relevance
  - inclusiveness
  - objectivity
  - transparency/openness
  - timeliness
  - verification/validation
  - peer review
- The importance of peer review is grounded in the earlier [Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review](#) (GAO, 2005)
- These notices provide Agency flexibility in determining how and when to best conduct peer review

# Framework format

## 1. Summary ( [C.4 Attachment 1](#) )

- Spells out the need for the framework and the format
- Identifies importance of peer review
- Describes BSIA POCs for SSC
- Describes the process in the case of disagreements

## 2. Workbook ( [C.4 Attachment 2](#) )

- Five sections
  - CPS • HMS • Salmon • Groundfish • Hake
- Each section identifies:
  - Partners (participating groups)
  - Role of each partner in each step (not all partners have a role in each step)

# Framework: Groundfish-CPS BSIA

- Covers the review processes for the range of assessment products
  - Benchmark (Full) assessments,
  - Updates,
  - Data-moderate assessments, as appropriate
  - Data-poor assessments, as appropriate
  - Rebuilding Analyses, and
  - Catch-only Projections
- BSIA certification by Science Centers to the WCRO
- Status Determination by WCRO
- Changes made in response to SSC comments

# Framework: HMS BSIA

- Documents the international review processes under which assessments and proxies for FMP species are reviewed (as part of international agreements)
  - International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean
  - Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
  - The science provider for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
- Documents review process for HMS stock assessments conducted by NMFS outside the international RMFO arena
- BSIA certification by Science Centers to the WCRO
- Status Determination by WCRO

# Framework: Salmon BSIA

- Documents the methodology review processes and identifies partners producing inputs to PFMC salmon management:
  - Pacific Salmon Commission
  - State and Tribal Agencies
- Documents roles of STT, MEW, and SSC in Council review process
- Documents contents of Review of Ocean Fisheries and Preseason Report 1
- Some reviews by bodies external to Council not available for description in draft framework - additional information has been requested
- The PD allows for flexibility in how BSIA criteria are met within abbreviated processes, such as that for salmon

# Framework: Hake BSIA

- Documents assessment development and review processes under the bilateral agreement on Pacific hake/whiting with Canada
- BSIA certification by Science Centers to the WCRO
- Status Determination by WCRO

# NMFS BSIA Points of Contact with SSC

- Focus on issues related to NS1, NS2 and corresponding guidelines
- The Centers may identify a POC (and a designee) per FMP
  - Drawn from levels ranging from supervisor/manager to division director and familiarity w/ science and management
- POCs are not expected to attend each SSC meeting
  - Stay apprised of issues
  - Attend SSC meetings, as needed
- Available for consultation by the SSC

# BSIA Disagreements between NMFS and SSC

**Premise:** Disagreement exists between SCs and SSC on an assessment's status as BSIA

- Ultimate BSIA determination lies w/ Secretary of Commerce (NMFS)
- All efforts made to avoid/resolve disagreements
- Resolution will emphasize: timeliness, collaboration, & positive working relationships
- If needed, SC Directors will convene a Special BSIA Review Panel (SBRP)
  - Directors and 1-2 external experts will evaluate areas of disagreement
  - SSC may present
  - SC Directors will notify WCRO RA and Council ED and Chair of their conclusion.

# Moving Forward

## December 2021 - February 2022

- Revise Framework based on Council feedback, as appropriate

## March or April 2022

- Present revised Framework to Council

## May 2022

- NOAA Fisheries finalizes the Framework by May 2022

## After

- NOAA Fisheries and Council identify situations where BSIA processes can be strengthened or better documented

Fin