

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
COUNCIL MEETING AND PROCESS EFFICIENCIES

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) discussed the “Staff White Paper on Formats for Council Advisory Body Meetings” (Agenda Item F.2, Attachment 1).

The SSC appreciates the continued opportunity to explore hybrid and remote meeting formats, which increase the accessibility and transparency of SSC meetings. The SSC recognizes the value of meeting in person, particularly for meetings with complex and potentially controversial agenda items. Stock assessment review (STAR) panels are an example of one type of meeting ideally held in person. Ultimately, the decision to adopt one format over another must weigh the benefits and costs of each format, which will vary according to the type and agenda of each meeting.

The SSC has the following recommendations:

- Discretion should be provided to advisory body chairs to determine the best meeting format on a meeting-by-meeting basis, given the expected agenda for the meeting.
- Suitable technology is required for a hybrid format to be successful. Given limited resources, investments in technology should prioritize audio quality over video features.
- Both direct costs (e.g., travel and technology costs) and in-kind costs (e.g., opportunity costs of people’s time) should be considered for each format.
- SSC meetings should be broadcast live publicly for transparency.
- The Council should continue to offer remote options for reading SSC reports, as this allows for subject-matter experts to be available for questions.