

FRAMEWORK FOR THE PFMC RESEARCH AND DATA NEEDS (RDN)
 FIVE-YEAR-UPDATE CYCLE

The [Magnuson-Stevens Act](#) (MSA) requires that Councils develop “multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fisheries interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes”. This includes research to support fishery management plans and associated regulations for fisheries requiring conservation and management to prevent overfishing, rebuild depleted fish stocks, and ensure sustainable fishing practices.

Governed by [COP 12: Update and Communication of Research and Data Needs](#)

Purpose and Need

Develop an effective process to identify research and data needs aligned to address current challenges of the Council and communicate them to organizations who may be able to support those objectives.

Framework

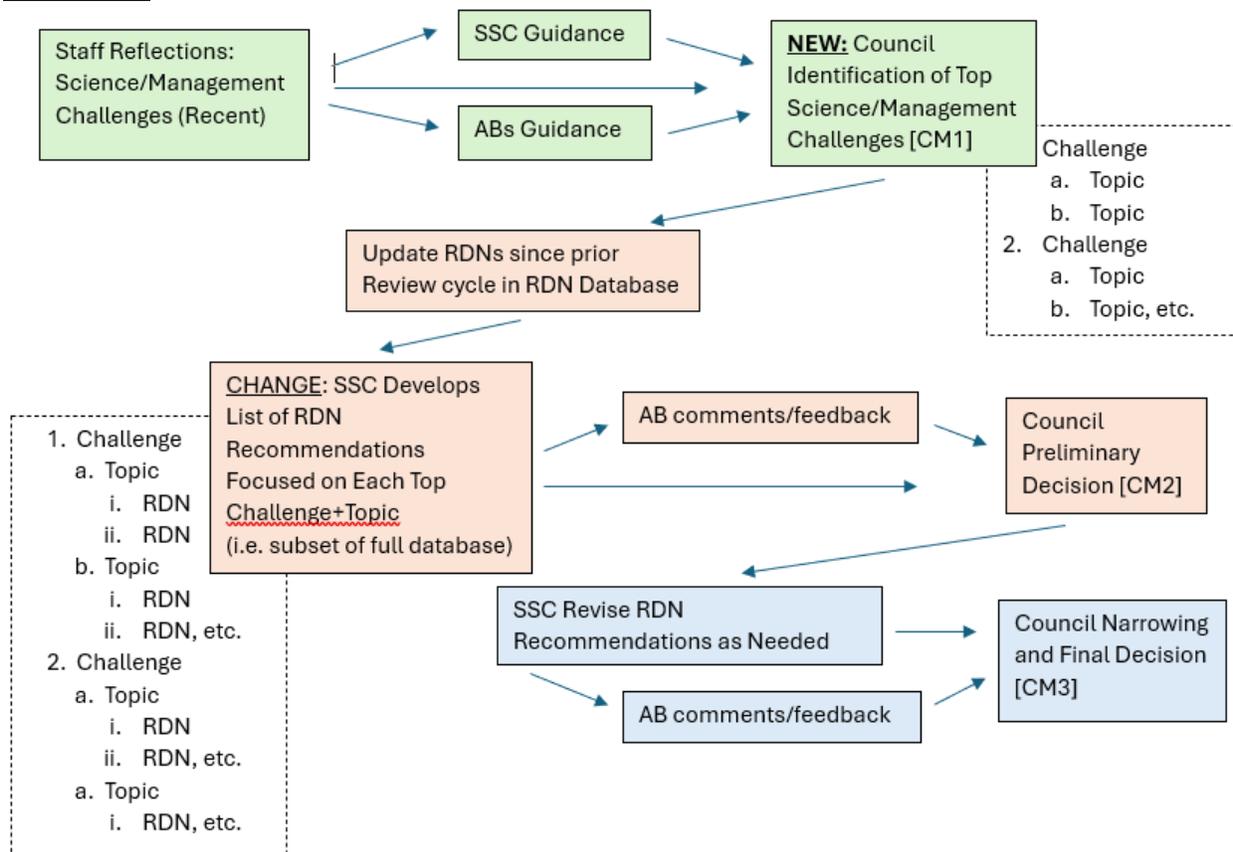


Figure 1. Structure of the research and data needs (RDN) process for review cycle.

Identify the most current Council priorities to relate which research and data needs can best address those in a three Council meeting (CM) process:

- Identify top challenges ~ November 2024 (CM1),
- Preliminary Action RDN ~ April 2025 (CM2),
- Final Action RDN ~ June 2025 (CM3).

As outlined for this cycle in Figure 1, there are three general tiers within this framework: 1. challenges, 2. associated topics, and 3. research and data needs.

Step 1: Identify top management/science challenges [November 2024 CM1]

1. Conduct an exercise to identify top management and science challenges

What are the top science and/or management challenges?

- Council level: Top 10 or less challenges identified and weigh in on associated key management and/or science topics, which ideally cover a range of Fishery Management Plans (FMPs).
- Management Team/Advisory level: Consider challenges and provide perspectives on key management/science topics; identifying both types of topics give the Management Teams/Advisory Subpanels an area of focus for their expertise (e.g. management) and allows the Scientific and Statistical Committee to structure the RDN recommendations into the broader picture. SSC feedback is particularly important in identifying science-related challenges and key topics.

The Agenda Item requires the Council to adopt a top challenges list and weigh in on guidance for key topics to task the SSC for the subsequent meeting, in order to match RDN proposals (new or existing) to each challenge/topic and potentially provide prioritization (i.e. prepare preliminary recommendations).

Step 2: SSC background work to update the current RDN database [Prior to April 2025 CM2]

2. SSC Subcommittee (SC) Chairs, with assistance by Council staff, work to enter any research and data needs proposals brought forward in Council work since the last RDN review cycle (e.g. in recent stock assessments), if not already in the existing [RDN database](#) [DB] or resolves/merges them to update existing content. SSC SC Chairs resolve duplicates, tag research focus, etc. during this exercise.

Step 3: Preliminary List of RDN [April 2025 CM2]

3. Proposed Solution to Challenges: Identify which of the research and data needs best address the Council's challenges and key topics (*ideally 10 or less for each challenge/topic*). This step can include how they relate to National Standards, address science gaps and improvements, and how workshops can be used to support them.

After the November CM1 with the adopted list of challenges and associated key topics, the SSC (or SC Chairs to Subcommittees to full SSC) evaluates RDN proposals to best address the identified challenges and selects a narrowed list of recommended RDN proposals for each. This could also happen via stages, first email, then public meeting.

SSC outcomes and preliminary recommendations would need to be ready for the Advanced BB (tentative deadline March 19, 2025) for the April 2025 Council meeting Agenda Item.

Council advisory bodies provide comments/feedback on SSC RDN recommendations found in Advanced BB materials for the April CM2.

The Council provides input on their preliminary proposals and priorities in April 2025 [CM2].

Step 4: Revisions to List As Needed [Prior to June 2025 CM3]

4. SSC revisions as needed before final SSC recommendations in June 2025 (Advanced BB tentative deadline 2025).

Step 5: Final List adopted of RDN [June 2025 CM3]

Council advisory bodies provide comments/feedback on SSC RDN recommendations found in Advanced BB materials for the June 2025 CM3.

5. Final Council action to adopt RDN in June 2025 [CM3].

Final adopted RDNs would be edited or updated in the existing DB for archiving to document the current review cycle process.

A letter of transmittal to NMFS with PFMC RDNs would occur after the June 2025 Council meeting.