

ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP REPORT ON ADOPT STOCK ASSESSMENTS

The Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) met virtually on September 9, 2025, to review the inclusion of risk tables in the Groundfish stock assessment process (Agenda Item G.3). Those who were involved with or able to observe their consideration in Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel reviews remarked that risk tables were praised for supporting constructive dialogue. From the EWG's perspective, the process appeared to raise the level of collaboration between stock assessment and ecosystem scientists, and to enhance transparency of the information considered by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) when determining scientific uncertainty of assessments (e.g., assigning sigma values). In addition, the approach was generally viewed as a positive pilot effort. The EWG would like to express appreciation for the efforts, contributions, and engagement of all those involved in the stock assessment process for the creation, evaluation, and consideration of these risk tables during this pilot phase of implementation. From those discussions, it is clear that risk tables are a useful addition and support a more ecosystem-informed and transparent approach to fisheries management.

Discussions during this pilot phase highlighted potential next steps to further improve risk tables. These include refining the scoring rubric, developing a rubric that can apply to category 2 assessments, and adopting less value-laden terminology for the different levels (favorable/neutral/unfavorable) to ensure credibility and clarity. The EWG also noted the incorporation of risk tables in the new [West Coast Groundfish Stock Assessments At-A-Glance](#) summaries (Agenda Item G.3.a, Supplemental NWFSC/SWFSC Report 1). The inclusion of the risk tables in those summaries underscores the value of risk tables as communication tools that promote transparency of stock assessment models with a diversity of audiences. The EWG looks forward to continued discussion on additional risk table refinement and the role of risk tables in the groundfish assessment process at a future Council meeting.