

**COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**Update and Communication of Research and Data Needs**

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Approved by Council: 07/08/87

Revised: 01/14/88, 03/08/90, 07/10/92, 04/06/95, 03/10/00, 03/11/05, **11/09/07**

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**PURPOSE**

To enhance the accomplishment of the Council’s research and data needs by providing a formal and effective procedure for updating these needs and communicating them to organizations which may be able to provide support in their achievement.

The Council, to the extent possible within its workload priorities, will update and maintain a research and data needs document which lists and prioritizes unmet Council research and data collection needs for each fishery management plan (FMP); including separate sections on economic, social, and ecosystem research and data needs.

The research and data needs document does not bind any agency to addressing or responding to Council needs. The key to the effectiveness of these documents is clear and timely communication of needs to parties with an interest and ability to respond. Particular emphasis is placed on strengthening communication with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The procedure outlined below is timed to have the best chance of influencing annual NMFS operating plans and NMFS budget requests for upcoming years.

**PROCEDURE**

Contingent upon its overall workload priorities, the Council will strive to develop and maintain relevant documents which display and communicate the Council’s research and data needs for 5-year periods using the following schedule of tasks as a standard guide.

Continuous

Year-Round                      Council staff keeps track of research and data needs as they arise in various forms throughout the year and, as appropriate, advocates for efforts to address Council (such advocacy shall not include the lobbying of Congress).

Five-Year-Update Cycle

April                                Council staff presents updated research and data documents to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and other advisory bodies for review at the April Council meeting. Advisory bodies provide written comments to the SSC. (Item is not on Council agenda).

- June The SSC presents recommended revisions to the Council. Other advisory bodies provide comment to the Council. The Council approves draft documents for public review.
- September After reviewing comments from the public and Council advisory entities, the Council adopts its research and data needs. The document is submitted to NMFS West Coast regions and centers and the states. The final document is also transmitted to West Coast and National Sea Grant institutions and posted on the Council web page.
- Early December Council Chair and staff meet with representatives from NMFS West Coast regions and centers and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) to develop a consensus on high priority initiatives needed to respond to Council needs. Council Chair writes a letter to NMFS to transmit the conclusions from the meeting.

#### Out-of-Cycle Modifications to the Needs List

If a situation arises that would benefit from an out-of-cycle modification to the documents, the Council may announce its intent to modify the research and data needs document outside the 5-year process and make such a modification at its next meeting.