



New England Fishery Management Council

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John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

**To:** Paul J. Howard, Executive Director  
**From:** Dr. Steve Cadrin, Scientific and Statistical Committee Chairman  
**Date:** January 27, 2010

**Subject: Scientific and Statistical Committee Recommendations on Operating Procedures**

Continuing the annual review of operating procedures by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) conducted in 2008, the SSC offers recommendations to the Council Executive Committee to improve the SSC process. The SSC reviewed the SSC policy document (November 2009), SSC recommendations in the last year, upcoming management actions, and discussions from the National SSC Workshop (November 10-12 2009, St. Thomas).

The SSC acknowledges and appreciates the continued support provided by the Council in terms of travel for meetings and associated work by Council staff. We offer the following recommendations for New England SSC Operating Procedures for amendment of the existing policy:

1. Membership and Quorum

- a. The SSC recommends that two new members be added to the SSC membership, increasing the SSC membership to seventeen members.
- b. The SSC recommends that quorum not be increased and remain at eight members present to form recommendations to the Council.
- c. Based on the increasing need for ecosystem considerations (e.g., habitat impacts, ecosystem-based fishery management) and socioeconomic issues (e.g., appropriate risk tolerance) the SSC recommends that the two new members should have expertise in ecosystems or social sciences.
- d. The SSC nominates Dr. Jason Link, Dr. Mike Fogarty, Dr. Tom Noji, Dr. Richard McBride, Dr. Patricia Pinto da Silva, Dr. Eric Thunberg, Dr. Bill Overholtz, Dr. Debra Palka, and Dr. Gordon Waring as new SSC members for consideration by the Council Executive Committee.

2. Peer review - The SSC concludes that it currently has appropriate involvement in the peer review process through input to terms of reference and representation in the peer review by a SSC member (i.e., no change to SSC policy document is needed). However, the SSC should include a review of draft terms of reference and SSC member representation as an agenda item for SSC meetings well before each peer review. The SSC notes that input from stakeholders is not effective during the formation of SSC recommendations, and there is a need for an appropriate venue for stakeholder input to the science and management process.

3. Research Priorities – The SSC recommends a revised process for developing research priorities in which: a) Plan Development Teams identify research needs and justifications, including research recommendations from the most recent benchmark assessment, and suggested priorities;

b) the SSC compiles PDT lists by category, identifying common priorities; and c) the SSC reviews the categorized list, and forms recommendation of short list of priorities to the Council.

4. 2010 SSC Agenda - The SSC recommends the following tentative agenda for 2010, recognizing that the Council may include additional requests as needed.

*March to May (2-day meeting)*

- Red crab – 2011 Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) and 2010 ABC reconsideration
- Skates – reconsideration of 2010 and 2011 ABC recommendations using updated survey data
- Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management draft policy paper
- Terms of reference and SSC representative for fall 2010 SARC

*Early Summer (2-day meeting)*

- Salmon ABC recommendation
- Research recommendations
- Programmatic review of management cycles and ABC control rules for all FMPs to identify work needed for future management actions

*Late August-Early September (3-day meeting)*

- Scallop ABC recommendation
- Groundfish ABC recommendations
  - Pollock ABC (review SARC results)
  - GBYT ABC (review TRAC results)
  - Index-based ABCs (review calibration workshop and recent survey data)

*October-November (2-day)*

- Monkfish OFL and ABC recommendation
- Terms of reference and SSC representative for spring 2011 SARC and TRAC
- Review SSC Procedures and 2011 agenda