
Subject: FW: SSC Info
Attachments: SSCMemo 1207 MOU.pdf; SSC MOU 2008 Version.pdf; SSC Job Description.pdf

From: John Carmichael [mailto:John.Carmichael@safmc.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 10:02 AM
To: Richard Leard
Subject: SSC Info

Rick,

George passed on the message that you were interested in our recent SSC revitalization efforts.

In December 2007 Council instructed staff to send out an 'MOU' that detailed the expectations for SSC members and asked that those on the SSC at the time sign and return the MOU if they agreed to the expectations and were willing to accept the current responsibilities of membership.

The use of the term 'MOU' and requesting signatures required some problems for some members – mainly NMFS and University employees – due to the connotations of 'MOU'. Therefore we treated the responses with a bit less formality and recognized that some would be unable to sign. In those instances we accepted an acknowledgement that they understood and accepted the responsibilities of membership.

To avoid such problems in the future we turned the MOU into the 'Job Description' that we provided to all members and provide to anyone who expresses an interest in serving and wonders just what that entails.

We sent a solicitation for members far and wide – blurb in the newsletter, to council members and SSC members, and distributed via fisheries list servers like those run through AFS.

John

*John Carmichael
Science and Statistics Program Manager*

SAFMC
4055 Faber Place Drive
North Charleston, SC 29405
(843) 571-4366 or (866) SAFMC10
Fax (843) 769-4520
John.Carmichael@SAFMC.net

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL



4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE SUITE 201

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

TEL 843/571-4366

FAX 843/769-4520

Toll Free 1-866-SAFMC-10

email: safmc@safmc.net web page: www.safmc.net

George Geiger, Chairman
Duane Harris, Vice Chairman

Robert K. Mahood, Executive Director
Gregg T. Waugh, Deputy Executive Director

December 18, 2007

Dear South Atlantic Council Science and Statistics Committee Members,

The South Atlantic Council is cognizant of changes to the role and responsibilities of the Science and Statistics Committee (SSC) dictated via the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). The Council also understands that new SSC responsibilities will correspondingly require SSC members to increase their time commitment to the SSC, and that such increased responsibilities come as the SSC continues to struggle with the considerable obligations commensurate with the SSC's role in the SEDAR process.

Since these new responsibilities have been unveiled in the MSA reauthorization, the Council has received and considered statements from the SSC members regarding their concerns with the SSC staffing level and their ability to accommodate the additional time commitments, tasks, and expectations. The Council concurs that requirements now placed upon the SSC exceed those that existed when current members joined the Committee. The Council further recognizes that SSC members are now required to fulfill a different role and that it will be necessary for members to contribute considerably more time and effort to SSC duties and responsibilities than has been the case in the past.

To address concerns raised by the SSC and to reflect awareness of the significant change in the Council process, the South Atlantic Council directed Staff to provide current SSC members with a clear statement of tasks, expectations, and responsibilities divined by the reauthorized MSA and to include estimated time obligations. This directive is addressed in the attached MOU. The Council requests that each SSC member please give serious consideration as to whether they have the time and inclination to continue serving on the SAFMC SSC based on the new duties and responsibilities. The Council requests you review the MOU, and if you desire to continue to serve, please indicate that desire by signing the MOU and returning it to the council office by 15 January 2008.

It should be known that the Council has directed an expanded SSC recruitment effort, and has directed the revival of assessment panels and plan development teams as FMP oriented

technical committees in an effort to help assuage the time requirements. Current SSC members are requested to please take part in the Council's efforts to increase the SSC workforce by submitting to Council staff the names of candidates you believe to be qualified and by directly contacting colleagues who may be interested and willing to participate in the SSC. SSC members who are unable to fulfill the expectations of SSC membership are encouraged and invited to maintain active participation in the process via membership on one or more of the technical committees.

SSC membership, including both new applicants and responses of current members, will be reviewed at the March 2008 SAFMC meeting in an effort to insure personnel changes will be complete for the June SSC meeting.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me, Gregg Waugh, Bob Mahood or John Carmichael at the Council office.

Sincerely,

George Geiger

George Geiger, Chairman

Memorandum of Understanding

South Atlantic Council SSC Tasks and Responsibilities

January 2008

The Science and Statistics Committee is the South Atlantic Council's primary technical advisory body. SSC's are charged in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) with developing, evaluating, and peer reviewing all technical aspects of council documents. SSC are expected to provide a broad suite of technical recommendations related to all aspects the Council's management program, which includes addressing biological, social, economic, and environmental aspects. SSC's also typically play a role in stock assessment development and review; in the Southeast region this responsibility is handled through participation the SEDAR process.

This Memorandum of Understanding specifies the tasks and responsibilities that are expected of SSC members to fulfill the charges mandated in the MSA and accomplish tasks specified through SEDAR. It is intended to ensure that all current and future SSC members are fully aware of SSC membership obligations. It is also intended to address SSC concerns regarding changing responsibilities, in particular those provisions in the reauthorized MSA prohibiting a Council from exceeding conservation recommendations of its SSC, by clearly stating the new responsibilities and giving current SSC members an opportunity to declare whether or not they intend to continue their service under the new requirements.

SSC members are asked to carefully review the responsibilities of SSC membership and the associated time commitment estimates in considering whether they are willing and able to fulfill the requirements of the position. Members are asked to sign and return this form if they are willing to meet these expectations and agree to fulfill the responsibilities of SSC membership to the best of their abilities.

I. SSC Responsibilities

SSC charges stated in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act

1. Assist in the development, collection, evaluation, and peer review of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to such Council's development and amendment of any fishery management plan.
2. Provide to the Council ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions, including recommendations for acceptable biological catch, preventing overfishing, maximum sustainable yield, and achieving rebuilding targets, and reports on stock status and health, bycatch, habitat status, social and economic impacts of management measures, and sustainability of fishing practices.
3. Provide fishing level recommendations for use by the Council in developing annual catch limits.
4. Assist the council in developing multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fisheries interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes.

SSC Tasks stated in the SEDAR Guidelines

1. Participate in SEDAR workshops
2. Fill dedicated SEDAR workshop positions:
 - Provide assessment workshop stock leader and rapporteur (1 per stock)
 - Provide assessment workshop representative to review workshop
 - Provide an independent reviewer to SEDAR review panels
3. Present SEDAR assessment to SSC
4. Conduct and review SEDAR assessment updates

II. Anticipated Time Commitments

SSC Meetings – 12 days.

The SSC meets a minimum of twice per year with meeting length averaging 2.5 days. Pre-meeting preparation and post-meeting wrap up should be expected to require an additional time commitment equal to the meeting period, and an additional day is required for travel. Each meeting can therefore be expected to require 6 days.

Subcommittee Meetings – 4 days.

The SSC occasionally convenes topical subcommittees to address particular issues. Such subcommittees typically meet once for 2-5 days and participants should expect to devote several days to prepare materials for review and complete a committee report. Although it is difficult to estimate average time demands for this type of *ad hoc* work, Committee members should anticipate devoting an average of 4 days per year to special committees and projects.

SEDAR Assessments – 10 days

The SSC is expected to play a major role in stock assessment development and review. This role is facilitated and supported by the SEDAR process which was specifically developed to increase the involvement of scientists and constituents in assessment decisions and evaluations. SEDAR provides a mechanism for both benchmark and update assessments. Two annual SEDAR benchmark assessment cycles are divided among 3 regional Councils, so each Council can anticipate participating in 1 SEDAR cycle addressing benchmark assessments for 1-2 individual stocks each 18 months. Assessment updates are negotiated between the Councils and the Southeast Fishery Science Center, with each Council anticipating one update each year. SSC members participate in the development and review of assessment updates.

Filling designated SSC roles in SEDAR workshops requires at least 2 SSC members per stock at each workshop. Applying the rule that preparation time equals meeting time results in an overall time commitment of 6 weeks per stock and 12 weeks of cumulative SSC time for an entire SEDAR benchmark cycle. These burden will be distributed across several members, some members will attend multiple workshops, some workshops will require additional representation, and this commitment only applies to a few members every 18 months. Several SSC members are required for assessment updates, which are typically conducted during a 3 day workshop.

On an annual basis members should budget 2 weeks (10 days) to SEDAR projects with an expectation that most years they will not spend any time on SEDAR activities, but once every several years they may be asked to devote considerable time.

Technical committees – 2 days

Council technical committees organized around individual FMPs are being developed to increase the workforce available for SEDAR assessment tasks. Technical committees are also envisioned as a means to develop supporting documentation and preliminary evaluates for SSC tasks such as providing

fishing level recommendations required under the MSA. Technical committees may also play a role in developing SAFE reports in the future.

SSC members are asked to consider serving on one or more technical committees within their area of expertise to provide feedback and continuity between the groups. It is expected that technical committees will handle much of their work through email and conference calls. Participation is expected to require 2 days per year on average.

Total SSC Time Commitment: 15 - 20 days

Calculating an average annual time commitment is difficult because involvement in SEDAR workshops, SSC subcommittees and Technical committees will vary for each individual and across years depending on the responsibilities an individual accepts. Based on the time allotted for the 2 SSC meetings and anticipating some involvement each year in either SEDAR workshops, SSC subcommittees, or representing the SSC on Technical committees, it is anticipated that an SSC member will devote 3-4 weeks of time to meetings, travel, and preparation.

III. Acknowledgment of Responsibilities and Expectations

I acknowledge receiving and reviewing this Memorandum of Understanding addressing South Atlantic Council Science and Statistics Committee tasks and responsibilities.

_____ I agree to serve on the SSC, accept the responsibilities of membership, and intend to devote the necessary time required to complete SSC tasks.

_____ I am unable to accept

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



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TEL 843/571-4366

FAX 843/769-4520

Toll Free 1-866-SAFMC-10

email: safmc@safmc.net

web page: www.safmc.net

George Geiger, Chairman
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South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Scientific and Statistical Committee

Job Description

March 2008

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) is the South Atlantic Council's primary technical advisory body. SSC's are charged in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) with developing, evaluating, and peer reviewing all technical aspects of council documents. SSC are expected to provide a broad suite of technical recommendations related to all aspects of the Council's management program, including addressing biological, social, economic, and environmental aspects. SSC's also play a role in stock assessment development and review; in the Southeast region this responsibility is handled through the SEDAR process.

I. SSC Responsibilities

SSC charges stated in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act

1. Assist in the development, collection, evaluation, and peer review of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to such Council's development and amendment of any fishery management plan.
2. Provide to the Council ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions, including recommendations for acceptable biological catch, preventing overfishing, maximum sustainable yield, and achieving rebuilding targets, and reports on stock status and health, bycatch, habitat status, social and economic impacts of management measures, and sustainability of fishing practices.
3. Provide fishing level recommendations for use by the Council in developing annual catch limits.

4. Assist the council in developing multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fisheries interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes.

SSC Charges stated in the SEDAR Guidelines

1. Participate in SEDAR workshops
2. Fill dedicated SEDAR workshop positions
3. Assist in presenting SEDAR assessments to the full SSC
4. Conduct and review SEDAR assessment updates

II. SSC Objectives Stated in the SAMFC SSC Operating Procedures

1. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) shall provide expert scientific and technical advice to the Council on the development of fishery management policy, on establishing the goals and objectives of fishery management plans (FMP) or amendments, and on the preparation of such plans or amendments.
2. When requested by the Council, the SSC, through its Biological and/or Socioeconomic Subcommittees, shall supply the Council with a critical review of the scientific information necessary to make management decisions, such as stock assessments and reviews (e.g., SEDAR), reports on stock status, socioeconomic impacts of management measures, sustainability of fishing practices, and habitat and ecosystem status. Such information may include a recommendation on ABC, where appropriate, based on the best scientific information available.
3. The SSC shall assist the Council in the development, collection, and evaluation of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council's development and amendment of any FMP.
4. The SSC shall assist the Council in determining what statistical, biological, economic, social or other scientific information is needed for the development of a FMP or amendment that meets the requirements of the Act; and shall advise the Council as to the best way of obtaining this information, including identifying entities with ongoing research programs that may be able to develop the needed information.
5. The SSC shall advise the Council on preparing comments on any FMP or amendments prepared by the Secretary or Secretary's delegate or other Councils which are transmitted to the Council pursuant to the Act.
6. The SSC shall comment on, if requested by the Council, any proposed regulations which the Council deems necessary to implement any FMP or any amendment to a FMP which is prepared by the Council.
7. The SSC shall assist the Council in establishing criteria for judging plan effectiveness.
8. The SSC shall submit to the Council such reports as the Committee deems appropriate and such reports as are requested by the Council.
9. The SSC shall perform such other necessary and appropriate duties as may be requested by the Council to carry out its functions under the Act.

III. Meetings and Activities to Fulfill Responsibilities and Objectives

SSC Meetings

The SSC meets twice per year in conjunction with the Council meetings in June and December. Most SSC meetings will begin Sunday afternoon and adjourn Tuesday afternoon.

Meeting time is devoted to presentation of materials, discussion of issues, and preparation of a written report for submission to the Council. The Council expects a final written report at the conclusion of each SSC meeting.

Ad-Hoc and Subcommittee Meetings

The SSC occasionally convenes topical subcommittees or ad hoc committees to address specific issues. Such committees conduct their business in the most efficient and convenient means available, which may include email strings, conference calls, and meetings. SSC members will be asked to volunteer for these committees.

SEDAR Assessment Workshops

The SSC is expected to play a major role in stock assessment development and review. This role is facilitated and supported by the SEDAR process, specifically developed to increase scientist and constituent involvement in stock assessments. SEDAR provides a mechanism for both benchmark and update assessments, with benchmarks conducted in a rigorous 3 workshop process and updates conducted primarily through the SSC and an analytical team. Several SSC members are desired for both benchmark and update workshops. SSC members are expected to volunteer to participate in SEDAR workshops.

Technical committees

Council technical committees organized around individual FMPs are being developed to increase the workforce available for SEDAR assessment tasks, develop supporting documentation and preliminary evaluates for SSC tasks such as providing fishing level recommendations required under the MSA, and produce SAFE reports. SSC members are encouraged to also participate in technical committees that are within their realm of experience and expertise.

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE POLICY

(Revised September 2006)

Objectives and Duties

When requested by the council through the Executive Director

1. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) shall provide expert scientific and technical advice to the Council on the development of fishery management policy, on establishing the goals and objectives of fishery management plans (FMP) or amendments, and on the preparation of such plans or amendments.
2. When requested by the Council, the SSC, through its Biological and/or Socioeconomic Subcommittees, shall supply the Council with a critical review of the scientific information necessary to make management decisions, such as stock assessments and reviews (e.g., SEDAR), reports on stock status, socioeconomic impacts of management measures, sustainability of fishing practices, and habitat and ecosystem status. Such information may include a recommendation on ABC, where appropriate, based on the best scientific information available.
3. The SSC shall assist the Council in the development, collection, and evaluation of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council's development and amendment of any FMP.
4. The SSC shall assist the Council in determining what statistical, biological, economic, social or other scientific information is needed for the development of a FMP or amendment that meets the requirements of the Act; and shall advise the Council as to the best way of obtaining this information, including identifying entities with ongoing research programs that may be able to develop the needed information.
5. The SSC shall advise the Council on preparing comments on any FMP or amendments prepared by the Secretary or Secretary's delegate or other Councils which are transmitted to the Council pursuant to the Act.
6. The SSC shall comment on, if requested by the Council, any proposed regulations which the Council deems necessary to implement any FMP or any amendment to a FMP which is prepared by the Council.
7. The SSC shall assist the Council in establishing criteria for judging plan effectiveness.
8. The SSC shall submit to the Council such reports as the Committee deems appropriate and such reports as are requested by the Council.
9. The SSC shall perform such other necessary and appropriate duties as may be requested by the Council to carry out its functions under the Act.

Membership Composition

1. The SSC of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Council.
2. The SSC shall be composed of experts in the biological, statistical, economic, social, and other relevant disciplines from the Federal, State and private scientific communities and whatever other source the Council deems appropriate.
3. The SSC shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its members to serve terms of 2 years or until a successor is elected. SSC members that are employed by NMFS cannot serve as chairman or vice-chairman of the SSC.
4. The Biological and Socioeconomic Subcommittees of the SSC shall elect a chairperson and vice chairperson from among its members to serve terms of 2 years or until a successor is elected. NMFS employees may serve as chairman or vice chairman of the subcommittees.

Terms of Members

Members shall be appointed for indefinite terms by the Council.

Termination of Membership

A SSC member will be replaced at the Council's discretion if:

1. They transfer employment or move to a different location.
2. They are absent from two consecutive meetings without giving adequate notification or reason to the Council Executive Director.
3. They appear unable or unwilling to fulfill their obligations as an SSC member.
4. Their area of expertise is no longer required; or
5. The Council determines they should be removed for just cause (e.g., violation of marine resource law and felony conviction, etc.; these examples are not all inclusive).

Appointment/Replacement of Members

When vacancies occur on the SSC due to resignation or Council action removing a member:

1. The Executive Director shall announce the vacancy(s) through the news media, Council mailing lists, NOAA Fisheries mailings and other such means deemed appropriate to solicit qualified nominees. Interested persons will be requested to provide a resume and other supporting material relative to their qualifications and area of expertise.

2. The Scientific and Statistical Selection Committee will review the qualifications of the nominees and make recommendations for appointments to the SSC to the Council. The Scientific and Statistical Selection Committee may consult with SSC members prior to making recommendations to the Council.

Administrative Provisions

1. The SSC meetings shall be scheduled by the Executive Director, with the approval of the Council Chairperson, as often as necessary to fulfill the Committee's responsibilities, within time and budgetary constraints.
2. The SSC shall report to the Council through the Executive Director.
3. The Council Executive Director shall provide such staff and other support as the Council considers necessary for SSC activities, within budgetary limitations.
4. Members of the SSC shall serve without compensation. They may be paid their actual expenses for travel incurred in the performance of their duties for the SSC in accordance with Council policy.
5. The SSC shall follow the Council's procedures covering confidentiality of data.
6. The Council's plan development format outlines the interactions and consulting procedures between the Council and the SSC.