



# **Role of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)**

**Caribbean Fishery Management Council  
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# Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)

- The MSA requires each fishery management council to establish, maintain, and appoint members of a scientific and statistical committee (SSC)
- The purpose of the SSC is to “assist it 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.” MSA 302(g)(1)(A)



# SSC under the MSA

Under the MSA, “[e]ach scientific and statistical committee shall provide its Council ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions, including recommendations for:

- acceptable biological catch,
- preventing overfishing,
- maximum sustainable yield,
- 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.” MSA 302(g)(1)(B)



# SSC under the MSA

- The SSC plays an important role in the Council's efforts to develop conservation and management measures that are consistent with the national standards for fishery management, including in particular National Standard 2 (NS2).
- NS2 states that "[c]onservation and management measures shall be based on the best scientific information available." MSA 301(a)(2).
- The SSC assists the Council in identifying the best scientific information available (BSIA) and provides advice and recommendations based on BSIA.



# SSC under the MSA

Under the pertinent guidelines, 50 CFR 600.315(c)(1):

- SSC scientific advice and recommendations to its Council are based on scientific information that the SSC determines to meet the guidelines for best scientific information available
- SSCs may conduct peer reviews or evaluate peer reviews to provide clear scientific advice to the Council.
- Such scientific advice should attempt to resolve conflicting scientific information, so that the Council will not need to engage in debate on technical merits. Debate and evaluation of scientific information is the role of the SSC.



# SSC under Council Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures (SOPPs) (2015)

## 2.5 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)

As required by the Act at Sec. 302(g)(1), the Council has established an SSC to assist it the development, collection, evaluation, and peer review of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council's development and amendment of its fishery management plans.

### 2.5.1 *Objectives and Duties*

The SSC shall provide 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. Specific details regarding the number and duties of members of the SSC are found in the Administrative Handbook.



# SSC under Council SOPPs (2015)

## **2.5.2 *Members and Chair***

Members appointed by the Council to the SSC shall be Federal employees, State employees, academician, or independent experts, and shall have strong scientific or technical credentials and experience.

Subject to the availability of appropriated funds, members of the SSC are eligible to receive stipends provided they are not employed by the Federal Government or a state marine fisheries agency, as defined at 50 CFR 600.134.

## **2.5.3 *Administrative Provisions***

The SSC shall hold its meetings as requested by the Council Chair. Notice of meetings of the SSC shall comply with the applicable notice requirements specified for Council meetings.

## **2.5.4 *Subcommittees***

Subcommittees will be governed in their duties as specified in the Administrative Handbook.



# SSC under Council SOPPs (2004)

## 10.0 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- 10.1 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) - The Scientific and Statistical Committee is composed of members of the scientific community, who provide advice to the Council on matters related to the conservation and management of fisheries resources (see Scientific and Statistical Committee Policy, Appendix I). The Committee is established under authority of the Act. Council members may attend sessions of the Scientific and Statistical Committee only when authorized by the Council Chairperson, or in a non-participating capacity as a private citizen.



## CARIBBEAN FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

### STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

#### APPENDIX I

#### SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE

#### AND HABITAT ADVISORY PANEL POLICY

##### Objectives and Duties

When requested by the Council, through the Council Chairperson or the Executive Director:

1. The Committee and the Panel shall provide expert scientific and technical advice to the Council on the development of fishery management and habitat policy, on establishing the goals and objectives of fishery management plans or amendments thereto, and on the preparation of such plans or amendments thereto.
2. The Committee and the Panel shall assist the Council in the development, collection, and evaluation of such statistical, biological, economical, social and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council's development and amendment of any fishery management plan.
3. The Committee and the Panel shall assist the Council in determining what statistical, biological, economical, social or other scientific information is needed for the development of a management plan 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.
4. The Committee and the Panel shall advise the Council on preparing comments on any fishery management plan or amendments thereto prepared by the Secretary or Secretary's delegate, or the lead Council preparing an FMP for any intercouncil fishery, which are transmitted to the Council pursuant to the Act.
5. The Committee and the Panel shall draft, or comment on, if required by the Council, any proposed regulations which the Council deems necessary to implement any fishery management plan, or any amendment to a fishery management plan which is prepared by the Council.
6. The Committee and the Panel shall assist the Council in establishing criteria for judging plan effectiveness.

7. The Committee and the Panel shall submit to the Council such reports as the Committee deems appropriate; and such reports as are requested by the Council.
8. The Committee and the Panel shall perform such other necessary and appropriate duties as may be requested by the Council to carry out its functions under the Act.

##### Members and Chairperson

1. The Committee and the Panel of the Caribbean Fishery Management Council shall have a total of not more than twelve members each of whom shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of the Council.
2. The Committee and the Panel shall be composed of experts in the biological, statistical, economical, social and other relevant disciplines from the Federal, State, and private scientific communities and whatever other source the Council deems appropriate.
3. Members of the Committee and the Panel shall be appointed by the Council for a period of two years, and may be reappointed at the pleasure of the Council. Vacancy appointments shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacancy.
4. The Chairpersons of the Committee and the Panel shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Council from among the members of the Committee.

##### Administrative Provisions

1. The Committee and the Panel shall meet as a whole, or in part, at the request of the respective Chairperson, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Council, as often as necessary to fulfill the Committee and Panel's responsibilities, taking into consideration time and budget constraints.
2. The Committee and the Panel shall report to the Chairperson of the Council or Council designee.
3. The Executive Director of the Council shall, upon the request of the respective Chairperson of the Committee and/or the Panel, provide such staff and other support as the Council considers necessary for Committee activities, within budgetary limitations.
4. Members of the Committee and the Panel shall serve without compensation. They may be paid their actual expenses for travel incurred in the performance of their duties for the Committee in accordance with applicable law.
5. Members of the Committee and the Panel shall attend regular meetings of the Council as required by the Chairperson of the Council, and designated members of the Committee and the Panel shall attend public hearings on management plans or other Council business as required by the Council.
6. Security clearances for Committee and Panel members shall be requested as necessary.



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