

SSC Report to NEFMC

NEFMC Meeting
April 14, 2022
Lisa Kerr, SSC Chair



Topics

The SSC meeting on April 1, 2022 covered the following topics:

- (1) SSC planning for 2022 and review of SSC roles and responsibilities,
- (2) Review of NEFSC 2022 State of the Ecosystem Report.



Terms of Reference

1. Review 2022 work priorities and timelines. Consider SSC assignments and a tentative meeting schedule for 2022. Review SSC roles and responsibilities including an opportunity to ask questions and discuss how the SSC fits in the overall Council process. Discuss potential ideas to further support SSC work related to ABC recommendations.
2. The SSC will receive a presentation on the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's State of the Ecosystem Report and provide the Council with any recommendations it has about possible revisions to the report for the next year.



SSC Planning and Review of Roles and Responsibilities

- The SSC received presentations on SSC roles and responsibilities, a review of 2022 planning, and SSC operations.
- The presentations reviewed guiding documents for SSC responsibilities and gave an overview of how the SSC fits into the overall Council process.
- The SSC was provided an opportunity to ask questions, and their discussion focused on recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the SSC operates.



SSC Planning and Review of Roles and Responsibilities

Highlights of discussion:

- The SSC discussed expanding its approach of having appointed stock leads and considered how to better integrate the expertise of the socioeconomic scientists.
 - Discussed possibility of a socioeconomic subgroup, such as the Socio-Economic Panel (SEP) under SAFMC's SSC, and resolved to continue outlining this approach through correspondence.



SSC Planning and Review of Roles and Responsibilities

- The SSC requested periodic presentations on new assessment approaches and models developed in research track assessments.
- The SSC discussed the pathway for getting research recommendations back to NEFSC for future assessments.
- The SSC asked about opportunities for input to stock- and topic-specific research track Terms of Reference.
- The SSC asked for periodic updates from NRCC's Assessment Working Group (AWG) from the SSC's AWG representative.



SSC Planning and Review of Roles and Responsibilities

- The SSC discussed the utility of the NEFMC's Risk Policy as a guidance document but also noted areas where additional clarity could be helpful.
 - The SSC recommends revisiting the NEFMC Risk Policy as a potential priority for 2023.



State of the Ecosystem Report – SSC Comments

- The SSC was provided a review of the State of the Ecosystem Report (SOE) by Dr. Sean Lucey.
- The SSC stated its appreciation for the work that goes into producing this report and thanked the NEFSC.
- The SSC noted the utility of the online resources and associated R packages that accompany this report.



State of the Ecosystem Report – SSC Comments

- The SSC offered the following suggestions for consideration as modifications to the report:
- The SSC appreciated the utility of the SOE tracking memo which allows for tracking how past suggestions have been addressed and what new work is ongoing.
- The SSC suggested that more detail might be provided in the future on the status of various items in progress and offered to help with prioritizing items to work on more immediately.



State of the Ecosystem Report – SSC Comments

- There were several questions raised about the environmental justice vulnerability indicators and why some communities were ranked as they were.
 - There was a desire to know more about the methods and any work that was done to ground truth or validate the findings.
 - In future presentations, it would be helpful to have a social scientist from the NEFSC participate in the SSC's review of the SOE to field these questions.



State of the Ecosystem Report – SSC Comments

- A question was raised as to when and how it is decided that a particular “risk” will make it into the report.
 - A suggestion was made to consider offshore aquaculture for inclusion as a “risk” in the report in the future.
- A suggestion was made to consider reference to the implications of climate change on some of the key data streams that inform NEFMC decision making (i.e., monitoring and stock assessment).



State of the Ecosystem Report – SSC Comments

- The SSC discussed how the information from the SOE could be incorporated into stock assessments.
- The topic of stock-specific work being carried out by the Ecosystem Assessment Division in the form of Ecosystem and Socioeconomic Profiles was discussed.



State of the Ecosystem Report – SSC Comments

- A suggestion was made to consider coordination between the SOE report and other annual reporting by NOAA such that there is consistency and climate is identified as a risk that is impacting the performance and economics of certain fisheries.
 - For example, opportunities for more integration across SOEs and NOAA's annual Status of Stocks, Fisheries of the United States, and Fisheries Economics of the United States report.



Questions?

