

# NEFMC SSC Workshop on Dynamic Reference Points Goals & Outcomes

## Background

Reference points in fisheries stock assessments and management are an essential tool for understanding the condition of a resource relative to a desired state. Dynamic reference points, unlike static ones, are allowed to change through time in response to non-stationarity in fish population dynamics. While scientific approaches to define dynamic biological reference points exist, the lack of a full understanding of their appropriate application and practical concerns about this change in key management targets and thresholds has presented challenges to adoption. This workshop aims to develop practical guidelines for integrating dynamic reference points into fisheries stock assessment and management.

## Workshop Goals

1. Establish a shared understanding of current approaches and recommendations from regional and national workshops on defining dynamic biological reference points, including the challenges of implementation and human dimensions.
2. Recommend ways to evaluate the effectiveness of existing reference points for NEFMC stocks to determine when it may be more appropriate to use dynamic reference points.
3. Evaluate alternative approaches to defining reference points that can account for non-stationarity, appropriateness of methods for NEFMC stocks (given data), and potential challenges in application.
4. Identify tradeoffs, pathways and potential stocks for implementing dynamic reference points within the current scientific process to inform management.

## Workshop Outcomes

1. A preliminary **suite of indicators and guidelines** for evaluating whether to use dynamic BRPs and potentially candidate stocks.
2. Consensus on recommendations for developing, reviewing, and maintaining DRPs, building on existing CINAR, SSC8, and NS1 guidance (e.g., **evaluation standards, evidence thresholds**).
3. A stepwise **implementation roadmap** that aligns scientific advances with management, legal, and capacity constraints and identifies potential risks.
4. A prioritized **list of research recommendations** that could advance our understanding of DRPs and future development of best practices for implementation.