

Transboundary Management Guidance Committee

DRAFT 2027 Process Review Proposal

(for review at 2026 TMGC/Steering Committee Meetings)

In May 2026, the TMGC recommended developing a proposal for a Transboundary Management Process Review to be conducted in 2027. TMGC members emphasized that the review should focus on practical operational improvements while maintaining the collaborative scientific foundation of the bilateral process. The TMGC Co-Chairs agreed to draft a proposal including review objectives, topics, and logistics to be discussed at the October 2026 TMGC meeting.

Proposed objectives for the review (from May 7, 2026, TMGC Intersessional):

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the ISATS framework following 2026 implementation
- Review communication pathways between scientific and management bodies
- Assess whether timelines are adequately supporting domestic implementation
- Identify opportunities to reduce process and science uncertainties
- Clarify roles and expectations among participating organizations and individuals

Proposed logistical approaches (from May 7, 2026, TMGC Intersessional):

- Timing:
 - Fall 2027
 - Integrated with 2027 TMGC meeting or separate workshop?
- Participation:
 - US and Canada science, management, industry
 - Identify a Steering Committee for the review – advanced preparation
 - Roles and responsibilities for participants
- Format:
 - Multi-day workshop style
 - In-person, remote, hybrid
 - Location
 - External facilitator or Co-Chaired by US and Canada
 - Smaller group working session followed by larger group discussion
- Expected Products:
 - Process Review Report
 - Action items, next steps, deadlines
- Budget:
 - Known/anticipated limitations

Specific topics for inclusion (from July 16, 2026, TMGC follow-up to TSC Meeting):

- ISATS Process:
 - The TMGC recommends a thorough review of the ISATS process, including the following:
 - Conduct a review of the effectiveness of separate domestic science processes and products, the TSC meeting process, and the utility of the ISATS report for use in management
 - Allowance of interactions between TMGC members and stock assessment scientists/TSC meeting participants
 - Allowance to review the draft ISATS report prior to final delivery
 - Prioritization of the TMGC negotiation process as the primary driver for scientific support
- Surveys:
 - The TMGC recommends consideration of the following survey topics in the TMGC Process Review and future iterations of domestic models, resource sharing allocations, and survey biomass distribution:
 - Inclusion of all available survey information
 - VAST models to include surveys that do not cover entire range of Georges Bank/Eastern Georges Bank stock boundaries (e.g., DFO haddock survey)
 - Consideration of survey timing and environmental drivers on stock distribution/abundance
 - Standardization of survey indices for bottom temperature and day length
 - Side-by-side comparisons with industry-based information
 - Alignment and agreement of survey strata applied to all processes
 - Estimates of uncertainty for each index
- Assessment approach:
 - The TMGC recommends consideration of the following assessment approach topics in the TMGC Process Review and future iterations of US-Canada bilateral management for TMGC stocks:
 - A joint approach to reconcile the differences in model assumptions
 - A joint peer review of models to provide a scientific basis for management advice of bilateral stocks
 - Consideration of stock structure for cod and haddock

Other proposed topics for discussion (informal input from US and Canadian TMGC members)

- TMGC Process
 - Development of a Transboundary Management Process Guide
 - Include details about the annual process (e.g., schedule and content of meetings, country, organization, and individual roles)

- Coordinate plans to update domestic documentation (e.g., websites, regulatory language, etc.)
 - US process for setting OFL/ABC based on TMGC advice
- Science-Management Integration
 - Provision of science advice as the driving negotiation tool vs. consideration of industry needs for viable, sustainable fishery
 - Approaches to reconcile the separation between science and management
- ISATS Model Comparisons
 - Description of model differences and rationale for assumptions
 - Implications of differences in domestic approaches