



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
Eric Reid, *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 21, 2021
TO: SSC
FROM: Chris Kellogg
SUBJECT: Scientific Coordination Subcommittee Workshop (2021)

The Scientific Coordination Subcommittee (SCS) is a subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) (<http://fisherycouncils.squarespace.com/scientific-coordination-subcommittee>). The SCS consists of the Chairs from each of the Regional Council Scientific and Statistical Committees, or their respective proxies. The function of the SCS is to plan and conduct meetings or workshops to discuss scientific issues of national importance based on terms of reference or topics provided by the CCC. The seventh workshop was originally planned to be held in 2020 in Alaska but has been delayed due to Covid 19. Currently, the workshop is being planned as an in-person meeting in early August 2022 in Anchorage, Alaska.

The workshop will include three theme topics:

- 1) how to incorporate ecosystem indicators into the stock assessment process;
- 2) developing information to support management of interacting species in consideration of ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM); and
- 3) how to assess and develop fishing level recommendations for species exhibiting distributional changes.

The SCS plans to explore regionally representative case studies for each of the three theme topics. The SCS workshop steering committee is requesting each SSC to provide specific suggestions for potential case studies for each theme. Under other business during the October 25, 2021, meeting our SSC will discuss and hopefully recommend relevant case studies. Case studies can be completed projects/actions, ongoing, or planned. The intent of reviewing specific case studies in various regions is to support the SCS discussion and help frame the overall outcomes of national guidance on how to address these types of issues. Please consider any relevant work or future efforts the New England SSC has been engaged in and be prepared to share potential case studies for further consideration.

Additional background information about these workshop themes is provided below.

Background

Theme topics for Scientific Coordination Subcommittee 2022 Workshop

1. How to incorporate ecosystem indicators into the stock assessment process?

Much work has been done in developing ecosystem indicators to assess environmental changes as they relate to federally managed species. Stock assessments are beginning to incorporate these indicators in a variety of ways to serve multiple management purposes. This session will focus upon understanding ecosystem dynamics and how insights from modeling can best inform stock assessments and resulting management decisions. For example, changing environmental conditions may affect vital population parameters (recruitment, mortality, growth) and availability of fished species to survey or commercial fishing gear (catchability). Changes in these parameters can greatly affect the assessment of stock status and biological reference points. This session focusses on approaches to incorporate ecosystem indicators into the stock assessment process. Among other approaches, this theme session will also explore the current and future utility of ensemble or multi-models in the assessment and management process.

2. Developing information to support management of interacting species in consideration of ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM).

Stock assessment considerations under evolving ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM) principles must address, among many things, the interaction of multiple species including predator-prey relationships. Various avenues have been explored, including assessment and management of fish assemblages and the use of multispecies predator-prey models to evaluate harvest options for both predator and prey. This session will focus on how best to address these considerations on a regional and national level, as well as the development of elements and considerations that should be considered for inclusion in the development of national guidelines.

3. How to assess and develop fishing level recommendations for species exhibiting distributional changes?

The Magnuson Act requires that stocks are managed throughout their distributional range. However, this mandate is challenging for species exhibiting shifts in their distribution, often under changing climate conditions. Fish movement away from traditional fishing grounds and survey areas creates difficult challenges for stock assessment. The primary focus of this session is to address how stock assessment and fishing level recommendations as should best accommodate stocks whose geographic distributions are modified with climate variability and climate change.