

# NRCC Meeting - May 2021

Welcome and Introductions



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# NRCC Meeting - May 2021

25 May 2021

- Assessment Topics - 9 am - 3 pm

26 May 2021

- FDDI/CAMS - 9-9:30 am
- Offshore wind update - 9:30-10 am
- NOAA Climate & Fisheries Initiative - 10:15-10:30 am
- Scenario Planning - 10:30-11:30 am
- Other Business - 11:30 am - 12 pm
- Wrap up



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# Stock Assessment Topics

NRCC - May 2021



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# Stock Assessment Topics

- Schedule Revisions
- 2026 Research Track Recommendations
- Research Track Steering Committees
- Assessment Process Improvements



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# Stock Assessment Topics

- Schedule Revisions
- 2026 Research Track Recommendations
- Research Track Steering Committees
- Assessment Process Improvements

Apologies!



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# Stock Assessment Topics

- Schedule Revisions - bilateral discussions
- 2026 Research Track Recommendations - Assessment WG
- Research Track Steering Committees - NRCC Deputies
- Assessment Process Improvements - Assessment WG



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# Schedule Revisions - Both Tracks ...

Dr. Mike Simpkins



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# Schedule Revisions - Research Track

- Overarching challenge
- Haddock extension
- Illex/Butterfish extension
- Plaice/Dogfish extension



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# Schedule Revisions - RT - Challenge

- Research track scheduling started one-at-a-time
  - Developing TORs
  - Soliciting WGs
  - Reviewing and approving both
- This resulted in all the Research Track working groups so far having less than 1 year to complete their work
- This has been a problem for every RT
- We have now carried out a bulk solicitation, so future RTs should all have 18-24 months (except Spring 2022 RT - Plaice/Dogfish)



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# Schedule Revisions - RT - Haddock

- Working group experienced several challenges and delays - in addition to short timeline
- Including Canadian data issue
- Running about 3 months behind
  - RT will not be complete in time to inform 2022 specifications
  - As such, more helpful to push into 2022 to avoid disrupting management actions
- Propose extension from July 2021 to Feb/Mar 2022
- Results would inform Sep 2022 management track



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# Schedule Revisions - RT - Illex/Butterfish

- Illex working group experienced some challenges - in addition to short timeline
- Data access was a significant, and unexpected challenge (larger impact on Illex)
- Working groups would benefit from extension from Nov 2021 to Feb/Mar 2022
- Results would inform June 2022 management track



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# Schedule Revisions - RT Plaice/Dogfish

- Bulk solicitation is getting us ahead - but
- Plaice/Dogfish will have 9 months or less if we keep the March review date
- Recommend extending Plaice/Dogfish from March to July 2022 (peer review)
- Results would inform Sep 2022 management track



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# Schedule Decision Points - Research Track

## Proposals:

- Haddock extension to Feb/Mar 2022
- Illex/Butterfish extension to Feb/Mar 2022
- Plaice/Dogfish extension to July 2022



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# Schedule Revisions - Management Track

- 2021 Postponements due to COVID (+)
- Shift in clam assessments due to COVID shift of survey
- Scallop adjustment
- Research track shift impacts



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# MT Revisions - COVID(+) postponements

## Postponed 2021 to 2022 (7)

- American Plaice
- Pollock
- Striped bass
- White Hake
- Witch Flounder
- Yellowtail Flounder (2)



## Postponed 2022 to 2023 (4)

- *River herring*
- *Sturgeon*
- Windowpane (2)



## Postponed 2023 to 2024 (1)

- N shrimp



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# MT Revisions - Clam shift

- Shifted clam survey timing to account for 2020
- Shifted clam assessments to line up with surveys
  - Surfclam assessment from 2024 to **2023**
  - Ocean quahog assessment from 2026 to 2025

Option	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Original	SCS	SCN	SCS	SCN	OQS	OQN	SCS	SCN	SCS	SCN
			SCA OQA				SCA		OQA	
Revised	SCS	SCN	SCA OQA	SCS	SCN	OQS	OQN	SCS	SCN	SCS
						SCA		OQA		



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# MT Revisions - Scallop adjustment

- Continue annual management support analyses in the fall every year
- Separate management track assessment (for stock status)
  - Conduct management track in spring - June peer review
  - Conduct management track every 2-3 years starting in 2023
- Result - additional assessment every 2-3 years



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# MT Revisions - Research Track impacts

- Illex/Butterfish extension - will still feed into June 2022 management track
- Plaice/Dogfish extension - will still feed into Sep 2022 management track



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# MT Revisions - Research Track impacts

## Haddock extension

- Requires postponement of mgt track peer review (2 stocks) from 2021 to 2022
- In turn requires shifting at least 2 stocks from 2022 to 2023
  - Perhaps  $\geq 2$  stocks that weren't already postponed to 2022: winter flounders (3), redfish, or halibut
- In turn requires shifting at least 2 stocks from 2023 to future
  - Perhaps  $\geq 2$  stocks that are repeated in 2022 and 2023: haddock (2), and/or yellowtail flounder (2)



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# MT Revisions - Decision Points

## Proposals:

- 2021 Postponements due to COVID
- Shift in clam assessments due to COVID shift of survey
- Scallop adjustment
- Shifts to accommodate haddock research track extension



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# 2026 Research Track Recommendations

Dr. Kiersten Curti



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# 2026 Research Track Recommendations

- Incorporation of Ecosystem Information into Stock Assessments/Advice
- Winter flounders
- Longfin squid and Monkfish



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# 2026 RT - Ecosystem/Climate

- Develop operating model/simulation framework for NE shelf
  - Can evaluate a range of issues (e.g., environmental covariates, multispecies models) and can explicitly show trade-offs
- Develop a decision framework for how ecosystem processes can be evaluated
  - Given multiple councils, multiple applications such as impacts on TAC, productivity indicators, or qualitative information to inform decisions
- Evaluate ecosystem components across several case studies
  - Environment effect on recruitment, survey availability, predation mortality, etc
  - Examine potential tradeoffs and evaluate risk when compared to management objectives.



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# 2026 RT - Winter flounders

- GB winter flounder
  - Data quality does not support VPA
  - Large retrospective pattern
  - Evaluate ASAP or state space model
- GOM winter flounder
  - Stock not responding to low catch
  - Contrasting trends in input data
  - Likelihood of a “model fix” for this challenge is unclear
- SNE/MA winter flounder
  - Stock not responding to low catch
  - Explore state space model and environmental variables



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# 2026 RT - Longfin squid/Monkfish

- Longfin squid
  - Challenge of assessing and managing sub-annual stock with annual estimates for intra-annual cohorts
  - 2020 mgt track explored cohort-specific BMSY proxies
  - Research track needed to address these challenges
- Monkfish
  - Review stock structure - some data suggest one stock
  - If ageing method developed, attempt age-based assessment (recognizing challenges with lack of samples since 2007)
  - If no ageing method, explore alternatives to a fully age-structured assessment (e.g., delay-difference models, index-based methods, data-poor methods)



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# 2026 RT Recommendations - Decision Points

Proposals (pick 2):

- Incorporation of Ecosystem Information into Stock Assessments/Advice
- Longfin squid and Monkfish
- Winter flounders



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# 2027 RT wish list

## Past wish lists:

- Ecosystem information in assessments?
- Jonah crab?
- Others on the 2020 wish list were selected for 2026 (longfin squid, monkfish, winter flounders)

## Other stocks/topics proposed:

- Retrospective patterns
- Spatial analysis of survey data
- Blueline tilefish
- Chub mackerel



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# Research Track Steering Committees

Brandon Muffley



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# Research Track Steering Committees

## Areas developed:

- Standing, cross-cutting committees
- Roles & Tasks
- Membership and Chairs
- Incorporation of stakeholders



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# Research Track Steering Committees

## Process

- Initial idea floated to NRCC Deputies before Nov NRCC meeting - further development supported at NRCC meeting
- 4 NRCC Deputy meetings: 12/18; 1/8; 1/14; 2/23
  - Focused on both generic RT TORs, bulk solicitation, and research track steering committees
  - Plus extensive intersessional work
- Outcomes of discussions captured in revision of Research Track section of Process Doc
- Revision shared with Deputies (and up): 5/12



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# RTSC - Standing Cross-cutting Committees

- Individual committees for every RT too cumbersome
- Propose 6 committees

Steering Committee	Stocks
Groundfish	NE Multispecies FMP
Demersal fish	Blueline and golden tilefish, goosefish, red hakes, silver hakes, skates, spiny dogfish, sturgeons
Pelagic fish	Black sea bass, bluefish, scup, striped bass, summer flounder
Forage species	American shad, Atlantic herring, butterfish, longfin squid, mackerels, river herring, shortfin squid
Crustaceans	Jonah crab, lobsters, red crab, shrimp
Bivalves	Scallop, surfclam, quahog



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# RTSC - Roles & Tasks

1. Review existing research and identify critical research needs for relevant stocks on the RT schedule
2. Encourage/promote research via NRCC
3. Facilitate research outcomes and findings to RT working groups
4. Consider stock structure early and inform NRCC if action required
5. Develop out year proposals (stock or topic) - which would be compiled and reviewed by NRCC Deputies, then provided as recommendations to NRCC



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# RTSC - Membership

- Open solicitation
  - Review and approval by NRCC Deputies
- 3-year, renewable terms (3-year cycle - offset between RTSC's)
- Membership can include
  - Federal, state, academic scientists
  - Industry experts
  - Relevant technical staff
  - Focus on expertise that will inform research and research questions
- RTSCs should balance breadth of expertise with practical size for discussions and logistics (anticipate a range of 6-10 individuals)
  - RTSCs can invite additional experts to meetings as needed to supplement RTSC expertise



# RTSC - Chairs

- Chair selected/approved from WG membership by NRCC Deputies
  - Facilitates work of RTSC
  - Ensures proper focus on research
  - Ensures appropriate handling of conflicts of interest (e.g., academic research \$ or industry future income)

# RTSC - Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholder engagement to gather input on research needs - all full meetings open to public
- Potential RTSC membership, if appropriate



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# Other Process Changes re: Research Track

## - Brandon Muffley

- “Plan B” changed to “backup assessment approach”
  - To address confusion between “Plan B” and index-based assessments
- Bulk solicitation and Generic Research Track ToRs



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# Bulk solicitation & Generic RT ToR's

## Bulk WG solicitation

- Working group for the 2022 and 2023 RT assessments
- Solicitation for 6 RT working groups on Mar 8
- Recommendations for 5 working groups to NRCC Deputies on May 12 for review and approval (pending)

## Generic RT ToR's

- 4 NRCC Deputy meetings: 12/18; 1/8; 1/14; 2/23
- Generic TORs shared with NRCC Mar 4
- TOR approval process
  - In past NEFSC has had final word on TORs, but have always (for several years) consulted with NRCC Deputies
  - Did the same here - final result was consensus of Deputies



# Generic Research Track TORs

1. Ecosystem/climate influences - consider for all other TORs
2. Catch - all data, spatial/temporal distribution
3. Survey data (all abundance indices, including catchability); spatial/temporal distribution; rationale for data used
4. Conduct assessment; compare time series, evaluate diagnostics - comment and address
5. Update/redefine SDCs; alternative as needed; evaluate existing and new SDCs



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# Generic Research Track TORs

6. Projection methods; justify assumptions; comment on reliability of projections
7. Research recommendations - review/address past, identify new, present and future, describe next steps for ecosystem/climate where not incorporated
8. Develop backup assessment approach
9. Identify additional stock specific analyses or investigations, develop additional TORs as needed\*

\*Any new TORs will be reviewed/approved by NRCC Deputies.



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# Discussion and Decisions

## Research Track Steering Committees

- Standing, cross-cutting committees
- Roles & tasks inform existing RTs, consider stock structure early, develop out year proposals)
- Process (solicitation, terms, Chair roles)
- Incorporation of stakeholders

## Other Process Changes

- Bulk solicitation
- Generic RT ToRs
- “Plan B” changed to “backup assessment approach”



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# Assessment Process Improvements

Dr. Mike Simpkins



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# Assessment Process Improvements

- Solicited Assessment WG members - 13 Jan 2021
  - Final member nominated - 9 Mar 2021
- 
- Mike Simpkins - Chair
  - Andy Applegate - NEFMC
  - Pat Campfield - ASMFC
  - Matt Cieri - ASMFC ASC
  - Kiersten Curti - NEFSC
  - Adrian Jordaan - NEFMC SSC
  - Sarah Bland - GARFO
  - Brandon Muffley - MAFMC
  - Paul Rago - MAFMC SSC
  - Michele Traver - Assmt Process



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# Assessment Process Improvements

- WG meetings - 26 March and 13 April
- Getting new WG members up to speed
- Focus on developing 2026 Research Track recommendations - work outside meetings
- Next will dig into the to do list [[link](#)]



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# Assessment Process Improvements

- New/other issues?
  - Winter flounder concerns?
    - Creative discussion about upcoming management track and state space model research track options
    - Underlying concern about speed of getting new data into management remains
    - Note that a large majority of model improvements and new data/ideas CAN now get into mgt track
    - Current guidelines restrict new model and stock structure from management track
  - Others?



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