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## **STRAWMAN SHAMELESSLY IDEALIZED SSC SOCIAL SCIENCE INTEGRATION: MEMBER QUALITIES, PROCESS, OUTCOMES.**

Strawman assumptions, assertions, triggers??

Let's begin with strawman working assumptions: 1 Fishery management is people management! 2. Better integration of social sciences and economics into the SSC process would help guide the Councils toward more effective, balanced, and more acceptable decisions! 3. Deeper understanding of fishermen, their families and their communities as well as their economic and cultural motivations would help guide the Councils toward deeper understanding of potential impacts of regulatory alternatives on the fishery and fishery sectors. This includes potential impacts of taking no action! 4. Reflexive thought about each of our own SSCs may give us a better sense of what is working well and what may not be working so well. 5. Observing or hearing about other SSCs in action may give us constructive ideas.

Imagine or recall a recent 2-3 day SSC meeting with a heavy agenda of action items. Was there full consideration of social and economic information? Did the stock assessment folks or biologists dominate the conversation? Was there a place for possible consideration of socioeconomic data on the issue at hand? Was there a mutual understanding and respect between the different SSC members regardless of their backgrounds. Were some comments more effective than others? Were the final recommendations sensitive to the economic and cultural needs of people in the fishery? Did the fish always come first? Did anyone engage in the "tactical uses of passion"? Was there a semblance of objectivity?

### **Member Qualities?**

Having reflected on the process from your regional perspective, what qualities make a more effective social and economic scientist on your SSC?

### **Possible Strawman member qualities:**

1. Disciplinary background is less important than having adequate training and practice in basic statistics and social research methodologies.
2. Multidisciplinary training and background can be useful if there is adequate training in qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
3. Recognition of how qualitative preliminary work and basic understanding of fishing communities and language can make quantitative survey work and analysis of documents and data sets more grounded and effective.
4. Past and perhaps continuing social and/or economic research on fisheries and fishing communities in the region makes one a more effective SSC member

5. Basic understanding of ecology and ecosystems makes a more effective SSC member
6. An interest in policy, “studying up” and grasping the political side of the Council process makes one a more effective SSC member.
7. Attending and observing Council and Council related meetings and understanding the public process makes one a more effective SSC member.
8. Reading and re-reading the Magnuson Act makes one a more effective SSC member.
9. Understanding related statutes especially NEPA, ESA, MMPA etc, makes one a more effective SSC member?
10. Basic understanding International Organizations, esp RFMOs (if relevant in your region) makes one a more effective SSC member?
11. Basic Understanding of environmental NGOs makes a more effective SSC member?
12. Respecting the need for empirical data and not being too POMO makes one a more effective SSC member.
13. Participant Observation in the fishery or fisheries makes one a more effective SSC member.
14. Personality factors may also influence how effective one is as an SSC member? .  
Straw factors: Humility, open-ness, willingness to listen, willingness to ask potentially naïve questions, patience and ??????????
15. Understanding of social theory from a broad perspective encompassing many of the social sciences makes one a more effective SSC member.
16. Reading and thinking about briefing materials in advance of the meeting makes one a more effective SSC member

**SSC Process: How well are the social sciences integrated into your SSC process?**

1. Do the non social science types ever comment on impacts of regulations on fishing families and communities? Do they suggest things that the social science types haven't considered.
2. Are there descriptive baseline data sets on the fishing communities and fishery dependent communities in your region?

3. Are your SSC members fully aware of these data sets? Do they refer to them in SSC meetings??
4. Are there social science research plans, Council committees, etc that identify data gaps and prioritize research?
5. Is there funding through the Agency, Regional Science Center or other sources?
6. Are there funds or procedures by which quick and responsive research can be conducted on pressing issues??
7. Is there an adequate cadre of fisheries social scientists in your region? Are many of them retirement age?
8. Is there adequate respect between the social science types and the natural science types? Between the economists and the “non-economic“ social scientists?
9. Does Council Staff include an adequate number of social science and economics types, and do they communicate outside the SSC process on sharing research questions and ideas??

### **Strawman Idealized SSC Process**

1. Issues are fully explored in terms of the need for regulations, the regulatory alternatives and the projected range of scenarios of possible impacts on sectors and communities of the recommended regulations.
2. Social science input puts a human face on the fishery.
3. Social science input is broad, scientifically sound and up to date enough to guide Council actions.
4. Staff input in terms of background docs and draft alternatives is vetted by Social science and Economics SSC members before the meeting. so presentations are improved.
5. Presentations on high quality and relevant social research are given to the SSC.
6. Adequate time is given to discussion of contentious issues such as design of catch share programs or other allocation schemes.
7. All SSC members have opportunity for input on social science research priorities.
8. Background data such as fishing community profiles are made available to all SSC members.
9. All SSC members review this data.

10. Social Science SSC members review the biological data, make some attempts to understand the basics of stock assessments and understand the uncertainties involved.
11. There is respect for each other's perspectives and each other's differing contributions among all SSC members.
12. Where appropriate, respect and understanding are shown toward indigenous and tribal perspectives.
13. Public testimony is welcomed after SSC discussion and before final recommendations are developed.
14. People are clear about their respective roles inside and outside the SSC.
15. NOAA employees serving on SSCs feel comfortable taking independent positions as independent scientists.
16. Social gatherings, soirees etc. bring conviviality to the members, staffers and others in the process.

**Outcomes: How satisfied are you with your SSC outcomes, and reports?**

1. Is there time for members to reflect on and give editing input to SSC reports??
2. Is there an institutionalized mechanism to share internal disagreements and minority views with the Council?
3. Is the agenda too full? Does it include extraneous reports?
4. Is social science fully considered and displayed in reports on issues that have a human dimension?
5. Are the social science and economic analyses credible?
6. Was there adequate baseline information on fishing communities to project a range of potential impacts?
7. Was the information current and up to date?
8. Did your SSC stick to the agenda in a timely fashion?
9. Did you leave the SSC meeting feeling empowered or frustrated??

**Strawman SSC Outcomes:**

1. SSC reports and recommendations fully integrate social science and economic information that is clear, understandable and relevant.
2. SSC reports include clear understandable writing on social science and economic issues.
3. SSC reports give the Council a range of alternatives with adequately characterized costs and benefits of possible Council actions on fishing sectors and communities.
4. SSC reports put a human face on the fishery and fishing communities.
5. SSC reports are suggestive rather than directive.
6. SSC reports are scientifically sound and credible.
7. SSC reports are acceptable to most members.
8. SSC reports adequately consider the national standards.
9. SSC reports display a degree of objectivity
10. SSC reports adequately display scientific uncertainty.
11. SSC reports adequately display data gaps.
12. SSC reports clearly express concerns of the SSC on contentious issues like allocation.